Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-89-037 *27 February 1989*

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Cuba

Castro Presides Over MINBAS Yearly Meeting

FL2302214489 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2102 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC [Communist Party of Cuba] Central Committee, is participating in the debates of the yearly meeting of enterprise directors of the Ministry of Basic Industry [MINBAS] that is being held in this capital.

It was reported in the meeting that, last year, merchandise production was over 1.8 billion pesos which meant a growth of 3 percent in comparison to the previous year.

During 1987, the basic industry had record production in 29 products, among them was a 6 percent growth in the power that is generated in the country. During that period, export funds [as heard] were provided at a value of over 500 million pesos—a figure that is 28 percent higher than the previous year. These figures are according to the main report being discussed at the director's meeting.

Over 3,600 km of power lines were built last year in the country. In the main report discussed in the morning session, it was shown that the Ministry of Basic Industry last year provided electricity to over one half million people. The report also emphasizes the commitment made by the workers of that sector to build 5,000 electrical transformers—4,000 more than the ones produced in 1988.

During the annual meeting of the MINBAS, it was also reported that nickel production was 36,800 tons, without including the production of the Punta Gorda plant in Moa.

Further on MINBAS Meeting

FL2402024289 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC [Communist Party of Cuba] Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, is presiding over the annual meeting of the Ministry of Basic Industry. The event is taking place at the higher level school of the Basic Industry Ministry here in the capital. The participants are analyzing the results of last year's work in the branches of mining, geology, glass, rubber, oil, fuel, and electricity—which constitutes an extensive program, especially in the eastern provinces.

The investment program for the ministry will also be checked and its main goals for the current year will be outlined.

[Begin recording] [Castro] I think we should begin by analyzing those areas with the most problems. We have problems in the areas of oil, electricity, and paper.

[Unidentified speaker No 1] We can begin discussing the problems in the paper production. It has had the most problems this year.

[Castro] That is right.

[Unidentified speaker No 1] We should allow Nelson, from the Uruguay enterprise in Jatibonico, speak.

[Nelson] A large number of problems have been solved that have stabilized the discipline and organization of the plant. We worked on organizing the maintenance plan. We made good repairs in 1987 and 1988. This put us in better working conditions to meet the production plans for this year, 1989. [end recording]

The costs of the [word indistinct] for the paper industry was a subject that was extensively discussed by the participants.

[Begin recording] [Castro] How much pulp, comrade?

[Unidentified speaker No 2] Twelve thousand tons, commander.

[Castro] How much does it cost?

[Unidentified speaker No 2] The pulp costs $400 per ton.

[Castro] It is strange that the cost of pulp is as high as the cost of paper. Is that so?

[Unidentified speaker No 2] Yes, that is the cost; no less than $400 [words indistinct] wood.

[Castro] Why do you pay $580 for finished paper?

[Unidentified speaker No 3] That paper which [words indistinct] factory, is normally $700 or $750 per ton. What has been happening is that because we have not been able to normalize and maintain a stable quantity in the various types of paper that clients ask for, we have had to adjust prices. Besides, we have also been paying the debt we have had for a couple of years. [end recording]

As for the oil branch, the director of the oil union explained the progress that is being made in drilling the wells.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified speaker No 4] We are building the second causeway for the bay. Three islets will be located on it. We have already reached the distance necessary for the first islet—it is at approximately 900 meters from the coast. We have completed the causeway up to that point, and we are working with the contingent comrades on the islet itself so that we can set up the machines there. We will have four wells. Then we will build two more islets. One will be approximately 2 km from the first one, and the other at approximately

2,850 meters which will be the final one. We will drill more wells there (?within) certain oil structures that are supposed to be in that zone.

[Castro] What measures are being taken should we (?strike) oil?

[Unidentified speaker No 4] Commander, this is connected underground with pipes. In other words, on the left side of the causeway, there are pipes which end up at tanks that have been set up on land. The pipes have been tested.

[Castro] What if the oil should suddenly come out?

[Unidentified speaker No 4] [Word indistinct] the pipes, and would be directed toward land. [end recording]

Commander Closes Meeting

FL2502034189 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro has closed the annual meeting of the Ministry of Basic Industry [MINBAS] that met all day yesterday at the higher school of the ministry.

[Begin Castro recording, in progress] ...from the very first meeting to this one. Nevertheless, the basic industry had better organization and efficiency than other branches of the ministry.

Two years ago, we were very involved with criticism and proposals for all the things that had gone wrong. We had all kinds of problems. Despite that, a year later during the following year's meeting, we were able to see that there had been considerable progress. Today, we can see even greater progress. The problems we have now are different. Today we discuss whether or not we want to go full speed ahead with the production of [word indistinct], or this and that. We discuss the progress of a certain contingent that is working on the Nico Lopez, we discuss the equipment it needs to quickly move the land, and we discuss how much it is going to do. Two years ago, the Nico Lopez had practically been forgotten. We had certain types of problems at the [word indistinct], nevertheless, it was one of the projects that was progressing the best.

The news we received today that the contingent working at the reactor [as heard] is producing more than twice what it previously produced is undoubtedly very good news.

Now, we are doing things like they should be done. Not all ideas have been put to use, nor are we moving too fast on this process of rectification. It is better to proceed at the rate we are going, without skipping stages, but with firm, solid, and sure steps whose results are evident. We will still encounter problems, however we can also analyze many positive and encouraging things that indicate to us that we are on the right path.

In meetings such as this one, you can see this progress much more. The starting point for the basic industry was much better than the starting point for other sectors. I think there are many promising things here. Based on the natural resources we have, I can see great possibilities. If we take care of our machines.... [rephrases] I am talking about those who work in contingents, those contingents take care of their machinery and, that is one of their advantanges. They do not break them; they do not have idle workers. The word "idle" in the construction contingents has disappeared from the map. We don't know of a single idle worker, or chronically absent worker. It has also been shown that the treatment and attention to man is a decisive factor. I can assure you that one of the decisive factors of the contingents is not its organization method but its true attention to man. The MINBAS has introduced new ideas and new working methods. I think this very school where we are meeting shows how important schools are, and hopefully other organizations have it. I am insisting on that for the mechanical industry, because all this could be very beneficial. This could place our prospects.... [rephrases] This could place us in one of the best moments of the revolution, coinciding with one of the most difficult moments of the revolution. We have had the two simultaneously.

Nevertheless, during these years we have also had an aggressive and threatening U.S. Administration that forced us to put a lot of efforts into our defense. During these years, we have also made a lot of internationalist efforts, such as the one in Angola—which will make available a lot of energy, and hundreds of thousands of men for development. We will have capable and disciplined people. It will also make some time available to us. In other words, it is true that we have had a difficult year; 1988 was difficult in many ways; I am not going to [word indinstinct] about that.

Nevertheless, as the night ends, the daylight appears. However, we must first make it through the night and create the conditions for the day. I think that anyone of you can understand, and can be enthusiastic like I am, about the prospects of what we can achieve if we continue moving at this rate, if we continue perfecting our work and efforts at the rate we have been doing it. If our sense of responsibility also continues growing, if experience continues to be accumulated, if the imagination continues to work, then, I think you will be exceptional witnessess of what can be achieved. You have seen it right here, in this area, where we started from an already better situation. Despite having started a bit ahead, there has been a lot of progress in these two years. The ideas and the areas where efforts are now going to be concentrated seem very good to me—this is speaking in general terms. We should also continue to carry out the concrete measure we have worked on so far.

Well, until next year. [applause] [end recording]

Commission's First Session in Luanda Ends

FL2502144689 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1400 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] In Luanda, Cuba, Angola, and South Africa have ended the first session of a joint tripartite commission that was established to study the application of the agreements on the southwest African region.

The delegates agreed to issue a communique to the press today on the commission's decisions.

The first session of the joint commission studied, among other aspects, a complaint presented by Angola citing South African aggressions on Angolan territory last 8 February. The commission also discussed topics on applying UN Security Council Resolution 435 which determines Namibia's independence process, to begin 1 April.

Before yesterday's final meeting, Alcibiades Hidalgo, spokesman for the Cuban delegation, said to the press that the atmosphere of the Luanda Conference was constructive and classified the matters discussed as important and delicate.

On these matters, each party expressed their points of view to compare with the reached agreements.

Joint Communique Issued

FL2502191189 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] The joint commission of Cuba, Angola, and South Africa examined and discussed the events that occurred in southern Angola, as well as recommended the establishment of the last border control posts on the Namibian border, said an official message today in Luanda.

The commission issued a joint communique that states: The first ordinary meeting of the joint commission outlined in the Brazzaville protocol of 13 December 1988 took place in Luanda, capital of the People's Republic of Angola, 23-25 February.

The meeting, the communique states, was attended by delegations from the Governments of the People's Republic of Angola, the Republic of Cuba, and the Republic of South Africa, as well as from the United States and the Soviet Union—the latter two as observers.

During the meeting, the delegations examined and studied matters relating to events in the south of Angola and establishing in the east joint control posts on the border with Namibia, as well as creating mechanisms for direct communication between the parties, said the text.

It also adds that the delegations made some recommendations, including methods to perfect the operation of the joint military control commission. All of the parties, states the document, reaffirmed, once again, their commitment to strictly comply with the agreements signed in New York.

The declaration also states that the delegations of the Governments of Cuba, South Africa, the United States, and the Soviet Union expressed their gratitude to the Angolan Government for the excellent facilities placed at their disposal during the meeting.

The communique ends by noting that the next meeting will be held in Cuba in March.

Castro Receives Puerto Rican Party Leader

FL2502142889 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1400 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba's [PCC] Central Committee, last Wednesday night received Carlos Gallisa, secretary general of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, who is visiting our country at the invitation of the PCC.

Gallisa gave an extensive presentation on the present situation in Puerto Rico and, particularly, the United States' plan to hold a plebiscite to determine the future status of the island. It was stated that Puerto Rico's future is seen as becoming part of the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean. The people of Puerto Rico have maintained their national identity despite having been subjected to 90 years of colonialism.

Vice President Attends Hirohito's Funeral

FL2402232089 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2233 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Jose Ramon Fernandez, vice president of the Cuban Councils of State and Ministers, along with representatives of 162 countries and 28 international organizations, today attended the funeral ceremony for Emperor Hirohito.

The Cuban representative walked in front of the Japanese monarch's coffin and greeted new Emperor Akihito; that is the protocol for the group of 20 countries, at the vice presidential level, who attended the funeral ceremony.

Jose Ramon Fernandez, today, also attended a meeting for delegation heads of socialist countries at the USSR Embassy in Tokyo.

(?Previously) the Cuban vice president attended an activity hosted by Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita for the delegations attending the funeral, according to a PRENSA LATINA report.

Soviet Minister Tours Enterprises in Las Tunas

FL2402031489 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Sergey Voyenushkin, Soviet minister of the construction materials industry, has toured several production centers in Las Tunas Province. Voyenushkin visited the Antonio Maceo glass factory where he expressed interest in the production process, the mixture of chemical products, and the work plans. He said the level reached in this type of industry will continue to rise with closer scientific cooperation between the two countries.

The Soviet minister of construction materials industry also visited the areas of the Jibacoa [word indistinct] center.

At the end of his tour, Sergey Voyenushkin granted an interview for this newscast.

[Begin recording] [Voyenushkin, in Russian with simultaneous Spanish translation] We are going to take concrete measures for the development of Cuba's construction materials industry keeping in mind the new objectives, such as reconstruction, and the (?expansion) of installations that already exist. Furthermore, the construction materials industry has given and will continue to give the greatest support for the solution to all these problems. [end recording]

Scientific Accord Signed

FL2502124989 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] In Havana, Cuba and the Soviet Union have signed a scientific and technical protocol for the development of the construction materials and glass enterprises in our country.

The protocol calls for the supplying of parts, repairing the cement factories, and investing in asbestos, cement, white ceramics [ceramicas blancas], as well as other materials.

Friendship Carnival Begins in Uzbekistan

FL2502155389 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1523 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] The TASS agency said that today in Tashkent, Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, a USSR-Cuba friendship festival began with a carnival.

The best groups of Cuban students who study specialty in (Almatah), (Brunze), (new Sigris), and (Bakus) are participating in the festival at the invitation of the youth organizations of Uzbekistan and the Cuban Consulate in that Soviet Central Asian Republic.

As part of the festivities, a concert was held at the Palace of Culture of the Tashkent State University. During the concert, folkloric songs and dances from Cuba and the USSR were performed.

With these celebrations, the 30th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution ceremonies in Uzbekistan will end. The celebrations began last December at the higher education centers of that Republic.

Romanian Communist Party Member Visits

FL2302154589 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Ioan Toma, alternate member of the Political Executive Committee of the Permanent Bureau of the Romanian Communist Party and first secretary of the Union of Communist Youths, has arrived in Santiago de Cuba [words indistinct] program of activities which he will fulfill during his stay in Cuba.

The Romanian youth leader will hold meetings in Santiago de Cuba with political and mass organizations. He will also tour areas of historic interest, such as the Siboney farm, the 26 July Museum, the exact sciences vocational pre-university, and the (Jose Merceron Ale) cement factory where he will receive a briefing on the studies and work done by the people of Santiago de Cuba in both centers.

Toma's first activity was to pay tribute to our national hero, Jose Marti, by placing a floral wreath at the mausoleum that contains his remains at the Santa Efigenia Cemetery.

Hospital Director Visits Dominican Republic

FL2202165389 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1522 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Dr Rodrigo Alvarez Cambra, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and director of the Frank Pais Orthopedic Hospital, had a productive 7-day visit in the Dominican Republic. The visit was to strengthen scientific and fraternal ties with the brother Caribbean nation.

During his stay in the Dominican Republic, the noted scientist gave lectures and conferences on the achievements of our health sector during the 30 years of revolution. Alvarez was given the title of honorary professor from the National Autonomous University of Santo Domingo.

The hospital director also visited the National Directorate of Social Security where he signed an agreement of cooperation between that entity and ours. The document will be signed in Cuba next April.

The visit by Alvarez Cambra to Santo Domingo has helped improve the orthopedic and trauma sectors in that country, as well as strengthening the friendship bonds between the two nations.

Portuguese Intellectuals Send Solidarity Letter

FL2202185589 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Portuguese intellectuals have expressed their solidarity with Cuba in a letter sent to the National Cuban Writers and Artists Union. The document refers to the large campaign carried out within the last few months against the Cuban Revolution and President Fidel Castro.

The letter states that the Portuguese intellectuals have felt the need to comment on the dirty activity being done by the large mass media organizations.

Communications' Workers Hold Fourth Congress

FL2402134189 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Attention to man and the need to improve his working conditions were the main topics discussed at the Fourth Congress of the National Union of Communications Workers which is being held at the Lazaro Pena Theater of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions in Havana.

The installation of electric and telephone cables is one of the main sources of accidents in the communications field and the delegates to the congress called for urgent measures to prevent these. The importance of adequate maintenance at these installations was also discussed.

[Words indistincts] a lack of magazines, newspapers, and postcards because of a lack of vigilance which promotes crime. It was also stressed at the meeting that the quality of service is affected by the instability of technical skills, above all for telephone operators.

The Fourth Congress of the National Union of Communications Workers will conclude this afternoon.

Communications Congress Ends

FL2402213489 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2103 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] After two days of sessions, the delegates to the Fourth Congress of the National Union of Communications Workers have elected their new national committee which is composed of 47 members. The new committee, in its first meeting, nominated Secretary General Agustin Lopez and Second Secretary Roberto Fernandez who, along with five other comrades, make up the secretariat of the National Communications Workers Union.

In his address to the congress, Agustin Lopez (?said) that, as elected communicators, they feel the responsiblity of fulfilling the commitments made by the National Union's Fourth Congress which has had plenty of input and where the main problems of the communications field have been discussed.

The union for Pinar del Rio Province received the emulation trophy for the Day of the Communications Worker. Pedro Ross, secretary of the PCC [Communist Party of Cuba] Central Committee gave the closing speech for the congress.

Report States Nation Guarantees Human Rights

FL2502191389 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] The report by the UN Human Rights Commission that visited Cuba at invitation of our country, includes a large section on the fulfillment of social, economic, and cultural rights. The document issued today in Geneva devotes 11 of the 55 pages to information given by the Cuban authorities in that sector, as well as a number of interviews with citizens, and visits made to social and economic centers in our country.

The fourth chapter of the report has an interview with the Cuban minister of labor [as heard] in which he explains how the state guarantees the right to employment, social security, and protection for mothers, senior citizens, and children, as well as health care for the temporarily and permanently sick.

In one of the evaluations, the document explicitly states the high-level training of the medical and paramedic staff and the modern equipment in the Hermanos Amenjeiras Hospital.

The document also includes figures that indicate advances made in the last 30 years which only refer to medical personnel, showing an increase from 7,000 to over 28,000 staffers. It also shows, with figures, the indices of improvement in public health, such as the increase of life expectancy from 52 years in 1958 to 76.6 years presently.

The report also contains interviews with peasants who say that their membership in agricultural cooperatives was voluntary. It also states that all the children of the cooperatives visited receive an education.

The document, which was issued in Geneva, shows statistics from the educational sector, including the education budget which was a little over 79 million pesos before the triumph of the revolution and is now 1 billion pesos. The report also states that in 1959 there were 15,000 university students in the country, but now there are over 310,000 students. This is 3 percent of the total population.

The group that visited Cuba notes the nonexistence of suicides due to severe depression caused by unemployment, racial discrimination, or drugs. It also shows the lack of racist ideas in Cuban mentality. The document includes interviews with intellectuals who confirm the existence of believers in different faiths within the National Cuban Writers and Artists Union.

Santiago de Cuba Airport Expansion Planned

FL2202153789 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] The remodeling and expansion currently underway at the Antonio Maceo airport in Santiago de Cuba will allow any kind of airplane to land there by 1990. It will also be able to handle more than 600 passengers at the same time during peak hours.

At this time, work is being done on refilling the drainage ditch [desfiladero de aguadores] which will allow for the expansion of the runway by 4,000 meters. Civilian construction has ended on the area that will be used to assist passengers. The current terminal will be remodeled and expanded later.

These investments have two fundamental objectives: to create the material conditions needed to handle tourism and national travelers in the most efficient manner, and to assimilate flights of any type and weight.

The remodeling and expansion of the Antonio Maceo airport will be completed in 1990.

Caricom

Trade Ministers To Meet, Discuss Performance

FL2302192889 Bridgetown CANA in English 1425 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Feb 22, CANA—Caribbean Common Market trade ministers will review an update of the performance of intraregional trade for 1988, among other issues, when they meet in Trinidad and Tobago February 27-March 4, the Caricom Secretariat here said. A preparatory meeting of Caricom officials is scheduled for February 27-28 to finalise the agenda documentation for the ministers. Intraregional trade was reported to be up by 8 percent for the first nine months of 1987 and the level of increase for 1988 will be analysed based on the available trade data.

The ministers will also review measures reported by member states to be obstructing access of their exports within the region. The secretariat said that high on the agenda for the 33d meeting of the Caricom council of ministers is the community's move to "develop appropriate common market instruments"—essentially a new common customs tariff and updated rules of origin—to boost the return to unrestricted free trade among member states implemented last October 1. Council will receive a report from a week-long meeting of Caricom officials on the revision of the common external tariff and the smooth functioning of the rules of origin, which govern the content of goods qualifying for duty-free treatment within the common market.

The Common Market Council has set a target date of January 1, 1990 for the implementation of the new common customs tariff and the origin rules. Current work on streamling the origin rules is aimed at encouraging regional manufacturers to increase their use of regionally-produced inputs and effecting a more substantial transformation of goods entering into intraregional trade. A good deal of emphasis in the officials' discussions on the origin rules has been placed on the production of goods of the assembly sector, the secretariat said. The council will receive and decide on the recommendations of the officials on these changes. With regard to agricultural matters, the council will receive reports from the 26th meeting of the conference on oils and fats and on the issue of the Caricom/US sugar quota. The status of developments of the regional programme under Lome 111 and negotiations for a successor arrangement to this Trade/Aid Treaty, which links Europe with the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Bloc, are other matters to be tabled at next week's council meeting.

Antigua and Barbuda

Opposition Wants Observers in Upcoming Election

FL2202190989 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] An opposition politician in Antigua and Barbuda has called on the government to allow international observers to monitor the forthcoming election. Prime Minister Vere Bird rejected the appeal saying it would be an insult to the country to have outsiders come in to observe Antiguan elections.

Barbados

Official Denies Arms Shipped to Suriname Rebels

FL2402142789 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Barbados has denied reports of involvement in shipping weapons to rebels in Suriname. The denial comes 1 day after reports surfaced that Barbados was used as a transshipment point for a planeload of weapons.

One Barbadian official said yesterday that Barbadian cargo planes have stopped flying into Suriname a long time ago and have never flown to French Guiana.

However, the Civil Aviation Ministry in Suriname is investigating a discrepancy in the flight of a plane that traveled from Barbados to French Guiana earlier this month. The officials say the plane was missing for 27 hours during its flight from Bridgetown to Cayenne.

Haiti

Opposition Parties Form 'Democratic Bloc'

FL2402173889 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1630 GMT 23 Feb 89

[From the "117 Magazine" program—monitored in progress]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The opposition in Haiti today is not a sole bloc. [passage omitted]

Several political organizations—among them the Haitian Christian Democratic Party, PDCH; the Christian Democratic Assembly, RDC; the National Agricultural and Industrial Party, PAIN; and the PNDPH, which is the Haitian National Democratic Progressive Party [Pati Nasyonal Demokratik Progresis Ayisyen; party name as heard]—2 days ago came together to form what they call a democratic bloc.

The head of the PDCH, Reverend Sylvio Claude, who is one of the pillars of this group, said that the group is made up of all the organizations that did not participate in the government's forum and that are not in the coalition advocated by the forum.

This bloc is different from the group of politicians who call themselves the democratic sector.

Sylvio Claude says that there was a big mix of all tendencies in the democratic sector—from communists to Duvalierists.

[Begin Claude recording] There was a melting pot [preceding two words in English] in the democratic sector. In that melting pot [preceding two words in English] there were communists, (?center) democrats, pro-Duvalierists—people who pass themselves off as members of the opposition but who are Duvalierists, people like Alex Dominique, Gregoire Eugene, Francis Charles, who is an authentic Duvalierist, and Edouard Francisque—and there were also a number of pro-Duvalierists, such as, for example.... [changes thought] Well, you will allow me.... [changes thought] I don't know (?if I am on the air). There are names I cannot name. There are people who have now gone and taken jobs in the Avril government. I have to call such a person pro-Duvalierist. [passage omitted]

I can't understand that at a time when the government is maneuvering to arrest political leaders, refusing to fire section chiefs, refusing to do anything at all; at a time when the government is affirming itself.... [changes thought] The government takes a minister, a man among the biggest of Duvalierists; a man who, at the Dessalines Barracks, ordered me tortured; a man who was in the Namphy regime, (?which) approved the St Jean Bosco massacre, and now it is precisely this man who is minister of interior!

Now, I cannot see a single democrat telling me that he is going to become a part of this government to see if he can change it! I would say that this is not true, that it is not that he wants change but rather that he is a pro-Duvalierist. (?I don't even think) such a person is after a job—because some people, like Bissainthe, for example, are not just after a job, I don't think. [end recording]

Sylvio Claude says that the new bloc's political line is an anti-Duvalierist line, a line that calls for the cleaning up of the public administration and a radical change of system with a view to attaining democracy. [passage omitted]

[Begin Claude recording] [Passage omitted] We of the democratic bloc simply cannot reconcile with Duvalierism, even moderate. In order for us to be able to reconcile with moderate Duvalierism, there would have to be justice and reparations. [passage omitted] That is one of the reasons we were not at the forum, because the objective of the forum was reconciliation between Duvalierism and the democratic sector, which included all those ideological currents.

We are not willing to reconcile with moderate Duvalierism without reparations. [end recording]

The democratic bloc's strategy is to mobilize the Haitian people in order to get rid of the government. [passage omitted]

Jolibois on Opposition Strategy

FL2402190289 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Dr Sylvain Jolibois, the coordinator of the Jean-Jacques Dessalines Nationalist Sector, told us yesterday, Wednesday [22 February], that if there is a tendency for the situation to return to normal in certain parts of Haiti, it is only a matter of strategy. It does not mean that the democratic bloc has stopped asking for Avril to step down.

Jolibois announces that a consensus will be reached on an alternative, a solution; and that in the coming (?weeks), the population of the four corners of Haiti is going to rise up to ask the government to step down.

[Begin Jolibois recording] It isn't that the motivation was bad. However, they highlighted the imprisonment of Rockefeller Guerre and myself, Sylvain Jolibois, a little too much, and also the demanding of the rescinding of the police communique that persecuted a number of union and political leaders for allegedly setting off a bomb, which everyone knows that the government itself did.

The government saw that the Haitian people were rising up against it, and that it might fall. Therefore, what did it do? Not only did it release us, but it rescinded the lying communique that it had put out. So the population felt relief. Since it was mainly on these things that the population had been mobilized, the population became confused. Things sort of fell apart. The population (?began wondering what it should do), especially since the democratic bloc had taken the initiative of calling for this demonstration.

The democratic bloc said to itself: Well, they gave in to us on certain points. This is perhaps not the time to hold that particular demonstration. Let's wait a bit. We will hold it later.

However, the line remains firm. This government cannot be allowed to remain in power. [Words indistinct] the Haitian people will bring it down [mete'l a terre]; and we will channel the Haitian people, so that the people can bring this government down.

Thus, this is a little strategic backing off. They say: Well, OK, let everyone go ahead and demonstrate (?in their own way). Meanwhile, we are going to look for other motivations, other (?links). We are going to reach an agreement with the ensemble of the country, because the democratic bloc has launched, over the radio, a call to all the nation's organizations to get together next Friday [24 February] at 1000 at the headquarters of Sylvio Claude's party [the Haitian Christian Democratic Party] so that we can [word indistinct] this thing, to see if we can't reach agreement on a single alternative to give the Haitian people. And when this happens, it will be time. We know where we are going. The Haitian people will have reached a decision. The entire population and all the organizations will have (?reached a decision). We will have decided what we are going to do.

So that is what is going on. But do not think that the thing is sleeping. No. In certain regions, it is still (?strong). And, as of the beginning of next week, you are going to see that the Haitian people know toward what they are heading, what they are going to do.

You are going to see the people rising up in the four corners of Haiti, so as to obtain satisfaction. [end recording]

Sylvain Jolibois said that what is dominating politics [politik la] is the maneuvering being done by General Avril in order to hold on to power, or else to control power through other people—people who represent the interests of the Duvalierists—by means of fraudulent elections. Jolibois feels that last week's forum falls within the framework of these maneuvers. Dr Jolibois considers all the participants in the forum opportunists who agreed to support a government that is repressing the Haitian people in the interest of their own personal interests.

(Frank Senat), president of the Haitian Liberation Party, says for his part, that the democratic bloc is open to all political tendencies but that in order to participate in the bloc, bloc members must respect the desires and demands of the masses [pep la]. However, although the bloc is open, Sylvain Jolibois says that all the [words indistinct] who participated in the forum will not be accepted.

[Begin recording] [Jolibois] (?Here is) the line we are drawing. We say that any party, whether it has many followers or not, any political organization that went and sought to reach an understanding with the repressive government so as to be able to continue to repress the Haitian people.... [changes thought] Well, the Haitian people are going to choose. As for them, if they have to form a government, (?that's fine). They will form a government with Avril, so as to continue to abuse the people. However, the line of demarcation will have been drawn by them. It will have been their choice.

And when we talk about an expanded democratic bloc, those people are not included. Everyone else can belong, but not them—because they themselves have already made their choice. That is Avril's coalition. If the Haitian people allow them to do it, that's fine. However, if the Haitian people ask us, ourselves, to do it, we will do it without them—and together with all the rest of the population.

[Reporter] Should you succeed in putting such a government into power, would you allow all sectors into it? By all sectors, I mean all the political (?leaders)?

[(Senat)] You know what answer we can give you today? We would tell you that it all depends on the demands and wishes of the masses [popile].

We ourselves are not followers of any one man. We are not even followers of any one party. We are both autonomous and in the front, simultaneously. In our opinion, this is always the best way. A responsible leader always follows the lead of the popular [popile] demands. (?Thus), according to the political action at a particular time.... [changes thought] I think that it is characteristic of a political leader to see how things feel day by day, to see what is going on. There are some things that we cannot make definitive pronouncements on, because it depends on the Haitian people.

We think that at this point.... [changes thought] There are a lot of different choices. We are in favor of pluralism. If we are in favor of pluralism, we cannot (?lead) the people (?to) something else. This is not possible—because each political party does, after all, represent a certain portion of the population. If, for example, a general election is held, we will be able to see how much influence a given party has; and at that point, the choice still belongs to the sovereign people.

[Jolibois] Indeed, the question on which you asked to know our position—a position which (Franck Senat) explained very well. By the way, there is, however, one little thing that he did not perhaps [words indistinct]. And for me, this is the very foundation of it. I am going to tell you what it is.

You are asking me if we will respect all ideologies that might exist in a government—and all sectors. And (Frank Senat) told you that we are truly in favor of democratic pluralism; and that in a given government we could permit.... [changes thought] In the past, such governments were called governments of national rescue, governments of national salvation, and so forth—(?that kind of fancy) name. But it is also in that sense that we are even considering setting up a provisional government.

However, we say that the delimitation has already been made. And the men who were willing to collaborate with Avril [mesye Avrilis yo], who went and asked for their national coalition, are against the masses [se anti-pep]. We will not allow anyone who chooses to be a part of this Avril-connected [Avrilis] bloc, this coalition.... [changes thought] Since this coalition is antimasses, this means that they too are planning to abuse the people. They cannot be a part of a democratic bloc—of a democratic bloc government—that I would form—and particularly the Communist Party! If it chose Avril, it could keep Avril. I myself am not afraid of any person, any party, or anything at all—because I feel that I am following events (?in the interest) of the masses [pep la]; and I (?am raising voices) in the direction in which the masses wish to go.

When I talk, I always talk in the name of the masses, because—and this is something else that I wish to point out—in democratic pluralism, I agree to have any group that represents a portion of the Haitian people [pep la] be part of a democratic bloc and a government, together with us. But I am against the idea of having any international (?force)—be it communist, socialist, or Christian democratic—think that it can come and put a government into power in Haiti. I am a nationalist. I say that our government will be put into power by the Haitian people.

And when certain statements are made—over Libre Tribune [a call-in radio program over Radio Antilles-Internationale, currently involved in controversy and litigation] for example—suggesting that there be a return to a government that thought (?that) an intellectual could serve as a front in 1989, [rephrases] for someone to agree to serve as a front, that business of fronts is over.... [changes thought] ...[words indistinct].... [changes thought] Those people must not return at all in any way. And we will not permit any international (?force) to come and dictate a line to the Haitian people. It is the Haitian people themselves who must choose their own line.

And we would like to ask them.... [changes thought] When an international (?force) thinks it can hand out money in order to change the popular vote in Haiti.... [changes thought] If any country whatsoever wants to help Haiti, we will (?take) help from anyone. But wait until a government is elected! Give the aid to the government. Don't give it to assorted raggedy little groups [groupuscules] that think they can be parachuted into power by some other country. [end recording]

APN Coordinator on Bloc

FL2402194189 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1630 GMT 23 Feb 89

[From the "117 Magazine" program—monitored in progress]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] Francois Pierre-Louis, the coordinator of the People's National Assembly, APN, explains why they of the APN are not in favor of the demonstrations going on. Pierre-Louis says that the politicians who are in favor of elections are catching a ride on the coattails [of the popular movement], only in order to take care of their personal business.

Pierre-Louis says that the [new] democratic bloc is a second version of the National Concerted Action Front, and he does not consider what is happening within the opposition to be a problem. He says it is just the different camps defining themselves.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] [Passage omitted] Don't you think there is a problem, because the Autonomous Organization of Haitian Workers [CATH], which is close to the APN, has also issued a call for demonstrations today, together with those political organizations?

[Pierre-Louis] Well, one of the things in democracy—and even in the people's camp we must begin to become accustomed to this democracy—.... [changes thought] Even though we collaborate with the CATH in a number of things, CATH, as an organization, is autonomous, and takes a number of positions on its own.

And of course we must also point out that the CATH is not a monolithic block. CATH has different tendencies within it, and different CATH leaders reflect different positions. So of course, certain leaders (?feel that they must) work with the candidates; certain other leaders feel they belong in the people's camp.

We must respect this position of the CATH, since it is a mass organization and an organization which also has a number of ideological conflicts within itself. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Death Threats Against MPP Leader Cited

FL2302165189 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Chavanne Jean-Baptiste, leader of the Papaye Peasants Movement, MPP, who had with him a peasant delegation, held a press conference yesterday morning at the Holiday Inn [Le Plaza] Hotel to talk about the Danielle Mitterrand award that MPP has received in Paris, France. [passage omitted]

There have been death threats against Mr Jean-Baptiste and several other members of the MPP. [passage omitted]

These awards were given to two French organizations—one that works with delinquents and one that works with political refugees in France—as well as to one African organization, one Asian organization, and the MPP. The winners received a medal and 250,000 French francs. [passage omitted]

The MPP is holding a women's congress on 3-9 March 1989 to inform women as to their rights and how to defend them. [passage omitted]

Labadie Citizen Arrested for School Attack

FL2302182289 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] The military in Petite Riviere de l'Artibonite area have arrested a citizen whom the population accuses of being one of the evildoers who on Saturday 18 February attacked the interests of the young people in Labadie.

[Correspondent Milceus Gaspard] The Petite Riviere de l'Artibonite military and section chief of the third communal section, (Esperand Charles), on Tuesday 21 February arrested Mr (Emilio Madeus). (Madeus) is accused of having been involved in the attack on the MJL [Labadie Youth Movement] school on Friday 17 February.

According to the person in charge of information for MJL, Mr (P. Guy Metre), men wearing red armbands appeared at the MJL school on Friday 17 February at 1100. They shut down the school, burned it, and forced the director to send the students home.

However, (Alder) and (Damas) Guillaume, former members of the MJL, admit that they did indeed shut the school down, but claim they were not wearing red armbands. They say they shut down the school because Serges Desroches had reportedly said that the school was his. Thus, they seize this opportunity to ask Serges Desroches not to even set foot in Labadie.

We point out that on the walls of the school was written, most clearly: Down with MJL. Down with Serges Desroches. Long live the Army.

For their part, the civilian and military authorities in Petite Riviere de l'Artibonite have decided to meet with the population of Labadie on Friday 24 February at 1400 to propose a new assistant (?section chief) to replace (Nates Saintfisna), who is accused of having been involved in the massacre of 14 August 1988.

This is Milceus Gaspard, Radio Soleil, Petite Riviere de l'Artibonite.

Perpetrators Taken Into Custody

FL2302183089 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] According to Saint-Marc correspondent Rodrigue F. Sejour, at around 0900 yesterday, Wednesday 22 February, a military escort arrived in Labadie to take into custody the people said to be responsible for the 14 August massacre of students in that town.

Panic Affects Schools in Mirebalais 21 Feb

FL2302183689 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Excerpt] In Mirebalais, in the (Desvarrieux) area, there was a big kouri [people running in the streets] on Tuesday 21 February. This caused students be become afraid and not go to school.

People were circulating the rumor that there were many problems at the schools. This rumor gave rise to a kouri, as we said.

Also, a little boy named Luc Joseph left home on Sunday and never returned. He has disappeared, according to our correspondent in Mirebalais, (Eliezer Etienne). [passage omitted]

Citizen Allegedly Kidnapped by Soldiers 21 Feb

FL2302192889 Port-au-Prince Radio Haiti-Inter in French 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Alfred Demosthene, a provider of fuel to a Petion-Ville bakery, was kidnapped on Delmas 31 at around 0500 yesterday, Tuesday 21 February, by a group of men, some of whom were wearing civilian clothing and others of whom were wearing olive green military uniforms. This military and paramilitary group had already taken several other people hostage.

The group subjected Demosthene to maltreatment and then took him to an alleged foreigner, who reportedly said, and we quote: It is not these people whom I am interested in. [Ce ne sont pas ces gens la qui m'interessent.] End quote.

The paramilitary group then took Demosthene and the other kidnapped people to the Anti-Gang Service of the Port-au-Prince Police. Alfred Demosthene is going to tell us about his mishap. Let's listen.

[Begin recording] [Demosthene, in Creole] [Passage omitted] They took us—there were at least six of us in the street—to a foreigner. When we got to the foreigner, they said....

[Reporter, interrupting] What kind of car?

[Demosthene] A white one.

[Reporter] And you didn't see the license plate?

[Demosthene] No, because the way they were moving, you couldn't get it. It was a Toyota pickup, without anything in the back. There were men in civilian clothing and men in olive green clothing. But there was a man (?from) Petion-Ville whom I recognized, because he is from Kenscoff. I know that he was a macoute. When I saw the fatigue cap on his head, he lowered his head; but I recognized him. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] But you don't know where they took you? What area?

[Demosthene] I do know where it was. I know where the house is.

[Reporter] Where?

[Demosthene] Further along Delmas 31, and then you turn up beyond Franck Romain's house. [passage omitted] We got to the foreigner's. The foreigner said: No, no! It is not those poor people. I don't see them among these people. It isn't these people. It's not them. [passage omitted]

Then they took us into the Criminal Investigations Department [now Anti-Gang Service]. [passage omitted]

As I was leaving, the same man I told you I recognized from Petion-Ville, who was a Petion-Ville macoute [as heard], was standing in front of the Criminal Investigations Department. When he saw me looking at him as if I might have recognized him, he averted his face, so I wouldn't recognize him. [end recording] [passage omitted]

However, contacted by Radio Haiti-Inter, an official of the Anti-Gang Service of the Port-au-Prince Police told us that the name of Alfred Demosthene is not on the list of people apprehended by that service on the night of Monday 20 to Tuesday 21 February 1989.

Soldiers Threaten Citizens Near Port-au-Prince

FL2402133089 Port-au-Prince Radio Haiti-Inter in French 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] [Announcer] There is a return to insecurity that is taking specific forms these days. For some time now, it has been affecting towns and villages in both of the plains that surround Port-au-Prince, and it affects the little guy. It is effected by paramilitary groups, and the means employed are becoming more and more sophisticated.

In Bigonet, in the Leogane plain, tear gas and automatic weapons were used to rob certain prominent members of a community made up mostly of peasants, and to force the others to stay at home and not come to the aid of the former.

The day before yesterday evening [20 February] nine robbers made a foray into Bigonet, a little village in the vicinity of Leogane, threatening peaceful citizens with their weapons. [passage omitted]

Here are some interviews with some witnesses.

[Begin unidentified speaker recording, in Creole] They began operating at around 1130 [AM or PM not specified]. [passage omitted] They told him to lie down, and he did. They said: Look up. He did. What's worse, they came with tear gas. They doused [benyen] his eyes with tear gas. [passage omitted] I can say that I saw three soldiers, because they were wearing uniforms, and they had tear gas. And there was a civilian wearing yellow trousers and a wine-colored tee shirt. The others were wearing olive green uniforms, and they had fatigue caps on their heads. One had a rifle and the other a pistol. [passage omitted] [end recording]

[Jean Dominique, Radio Haiti-Inter commentator] That was a witness to this incident, which occurred Monday in broad daylight [as heard], in which uniformed soldiers armed with heavy weapons participated. And, a big first was that they used tear gas. [passage omitted]

Student Demonstration Dispersed in Cap Haitien

FL2402194789 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Schoolchildren in Cap Haitien took to the streets yesterday [22 February] to protest the way school has resumed in Cap Haitien. They also did not like the way AEN [Asosyasyon Elev Nan No, Association of Students of Northern Haiti] ended a meeting held yesterday at the lycee. While in the streets, the students chanted diverse slogans hostile to the government headed by General Prosper Avril.

[Cap Haitien correspondent (James Saint-Julien])] The AEN, Association of Students of Northern Haiti, had scheduled a big meeting for 1400 on Wednesday 22 February. Many Cap Haitien students were present at the meeting, which was held at Lycee Philippe Guerrier. The meeting began at approximately 1535.

The coordinating committee that was hosting the meeting brought up the problem of education and all the students' demands. Some of the students were advocating that the schools shut down. It seems that AEN was in favor of there being school, according to a press release they had broadcast over the radio here. That is why the meeting ended in a stalemate.

After the meeting, [words indistinct], so to speak. The students took to the streets while certain other schools (?were limping along), trying to hold classes.

There was a rumor circulating to the effect that the students had a list of schools that are in the habit of remaining open even when all the other schools shut down. Thus, the demonstrators went to a school on Rue 18-E, Ecole Nationale (Panelie Francois). This school came under a hail of rocks.

The demonstration grew, as some quite nasty slogans against the government of Gen Prosper Avril were being chanted.

The Army, which is never caught in its pajamas and which was already up and ready, armed with heavy-caliber murderous weapons and tear gas, dispersed this demonstration.

You could have sold tear gas by the bucketful—there was so much of it! A young man passing on a motorcycle was doused with tear gas, and went and landed on a poor female who was running away. Both of these people were soundly beaten. They are both at present in the hospital, where they are being treated.

This is (James Saint-Julien), Radio Soleil, Cap Haitien.

Government Decree Creates Election Council

FL2402211289 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] The government decree regarding the creation of a Permanent Election Council, CEP, and the recommendations made by the participants in the government forum that ended last 17 February has been published. Under the terms of the decree creating the CEP, the CEP's mission is to organize and control, in a fully independent manner, all electoral operations—both in Haiti and at the different Haitian consulates and agencies [representations] abroad—until the results of the voting have been proclaimed and formally sanctioned. The CEP's mission is also to draft the electoral law, which it is to submit to the executive for the necessary followup; to ensure that electoral lists are kept up to date; and to handle all disputes in connection with any and all controversy occurring during elections or in connection with the application or violation of the electoral law, without prejudice to any and all legal action to be taken against guilty parties before the competent courts.

Article 4 of the decree stipulates that the CEP is headed by a 9-member council to be chosen from a list of three names submitted by each of the departmental assemblies in the following way: three members chosen by the executive, three chosen by the Court of Cassation, and three chosen by the National Assembly.

However, Article 13 says that in the absence of the institutional framework mentioned in Article 4 in connection with the choosing of the members of the permanent council, the executive will form a provisional council with the same attributions and prerogatives of the permanent council, the members of which will be chosen in the following way: one (?not a civil servant) by the executive, one by the bishops conference, one by the union federations, one by the Court of Cassation, one by human rights' organizations not participating in the elections, and one by the university council. There will also be a member from the journalists association, one from the Protestant churches, and one from the National Council of Cooperatives.

These, then, are some of the main articles of the government decree creating the Permanent Election Council. The decree was made public last night but appeared today in the daily paper L'UNION.

Further on Decree

FL2402212189 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The military government has just issued a decree bearing the date 23 February 1989, yesterday's date. The decree is on an institution that is going to exist to organize elections, a Permanent Election Council [CEP].

Article 1 of the 23-article decree creates an independent, legal, public, and civil [de droit public] institution with full legal personality called the Permanent Election Council, with headquarters in Port-au-Prince. Its jurisdiction is the entire Republic of Haiti and anywhere Haitians may vote on the occasion of national elections. [passage omitted]

Article 3 speaks of the Justice Ministry, which is the only administrative authority in charge of relations between the executive and the CEP. [passage omitted]

Article 5 speaks of the choice of members. Care should be taken to make sure that each of the geographic departments of Haiti is represented.

Article 6 speaks of the requirements for a person to be a member of the CEP. First, a person must be of Haitian origin. Also, the person must be a Haitian citizen at the moment he is appointed. Also, the person must be at least 40 years old and in possession of all his civil and political rights. The person must never have been sentenced to punishment involving death, personal restraint, penal servitude, or loss of civil rights [peine afflictive et infamante]. The person must have been been exculpated from any mismanagement of public funds. The person must have resided in Haiti for at least 3 years before his appointment and must not be bound by any contract with the government, any local organization [kolektivite], or any foreign organization.

There are several other articles, such as Article 9, which speak of the members of the council. Council members may not run for elected office during their mandate, nor can they hold a position incompatible with (?the statutes). They may not run for elected office until 3 years after they leave the council.

Article 10 says that if a council member should commit a serious fault in the exercise of his functions, he may be taken before the High Court of Justice. [passage omitted]

New Gonaives Magistrate Installed Amid Protests

FL2302165889 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] There is a new communal magistrate at Gonaives City Hall. The installation took place in an atmosphere of demonstrations both for and against this magistrate. There were also many slogans against any elections that this government might organize.

[Gonaives correspondent Jean Bouchereau Joseph] There is a new magistrate and a new garbage truck at Gonaives City Hall. Yesterday evening at about 1800, after much talking, the doyen of the civil court, the representative of the Department of the Public Prosecutor, and a delegation of soldiers from Port-au-Prince installed, at Gonaives City Hall, (Alexandre Etienne Louisfin), (Jean Chery), and (Alexis Fevrier). [passage omitted].

The delegation of soldiers from Port-au-Prince also brought a garbage truck with which to clean up Gonaives. [passage omitted]

The three membe.s of this cartel had been sitting at Gonaives City Hall waiting to be installed all day long. It was very late when officials finally managed to install them.

There was, as usual, much talking. [passage omitted]

For its part, the population too was on the scene. Some were there to say: Long live the magistrates. Certain people say they were paid to do this.

Many other people were there to cry out: Down with (Jean Laville). They asked that he pull up his cassava plants and move off the land. They also declared that they did not need fraudulent elections to give civilians power.

All this was going on under the eyes of many soldiers who had come from Port-au-Prince, who told the population that repression and abuses were over, that now the military and the civilians were one.

Certain people present who heard this commented: We'll believe it when we see it. [passage omitted]

Anti-Apartheid Group Departs for Jamaica, Cuba

FL2302173889 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The international delegation that arrived in Port-au-Prince Saturday [18 February] within the framework of the work of mobilization against the (?tough) South African regime yesterday asked Haitian students to support them in the battle to continue change in South Africa.

At a press conference Tuesday morning at the School of Law, this student delegation—which is made up of a representative of the International Students Union, UIU; a representative of the Latin American Continental Organization of Students, OCLAE; and an official from the youth section of the African National Congress, ANC; and which has been visiting Haiti since Saturday—asked for the solidarity of Haitian students so that they can put an end to the difficult regime in South Africa and Namibia.

This delegation has been visiting the Caribbean for the past month. They have already been to 13 countries to sensitize young students to apartheid in South Africa and to the problems presented by the independence of Namibia.

The UIU representative, Hector Ortiz, said the UIU operates in 110 countries worldwide. [passage omitted]

OCLAE exists to defend students' rights. According to (Ound Laeker), these two associations met with the national organization Feneh [National Federation of Haitian Students] with a view to mobilizing on the problem of South Africa.

According to ANC representative (Allan Givar), South Africa now accepts UN Resolution 435 for the independence of Namibia. [passage omitted]

OCLAE representative (Ound Laeker) also invited Feneh to the 13th world youth and student festival, to be held in North Korea from 1 to 8 July. [passage omitted]

The youth delegation left Haiti Tuesday morning for Jamaica. They are also supposed to go to Cuba.

FCPLN, Liaison Committee Invited to Jamaica

FL2302163789 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpts] We have here a press release from the Charlemagne Peralte National Liberation Front [FCPLN]. The press release says that following the election triumphs of two social democratic friends—Carlos Andres Perez in Venezuela and (Rodrigo Baez Cabas) [name as heard] in Ecuador—it was with great joy that the day before yesterday, 19 February, the executive committee of the FCPLN and the political bureau of the Liaison Committee of the Democratic Forces celebrated the victory of the People's National Party and Comrade Michael Manley in Jamaica.

The press release recalls that Dr [Gilles Michel] Hendrick, who is both secretary general of the FCPLN and a member of the political bureau of the Liaison Committee of the Democratic Forces and who taught for a long time at the School of Medicine of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, is a very close friend of Comrade Michael Manley. The note also recalls that in 1987, Dr Hendrick headed a delegation of the political bureau of the Group of 57 to the 49th anniversary of the People's National Party. This delegation was made up of Dr Gilles Hendrick, Serges Gilles, Jean-Claude Bajeux, Moyse Senatus, and (Gerard Gaetjens). The delegation had on that occasion been received by Michael Manley himself, together with several influential members of his party. [passage omitted]

A delegation from the FCPLN and the Liaison Committee of the Democratic Forces has been invited to visit Prime Minister Michael Manley next March. [passage omitted]

Jamaica

Manley Assures Investments 'Absolutely Safe'

FL2402160689 Bridgetown CANA in English 1540 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Feb 24, CANA—Prime Minister Michael Manley, still haunted by negative perceptions of his 1970's administration, has assured foreigners that their investments are absolutely safe in Jamaica.

In a speech Wednesday to a delegation of U.S. businessmen, Manley declared that foreign investors had "absolute and uncompromising support" from his administration and that they would enjoy "absolute right to make profits and to repatriate profits without interference."

"Those overseas businessmen with investments in Jamaica, those considering the expansion of investments, and those who are considering initiating investments in Jamaica (should) not so much as pause in their new investment plans," Manley said.

During Manley's previous stint in government between 1970-80, foreign investors shied away from the island, as relations between Kingston and Washington chilled over Jamaica's close relations with Cuba and Manley's emergence as a leading spokesman for the Third World.

The Manley government at the time, despite increasing participation in the economy, particularly through the ownership of utilities, insisted that it wanted a mixed economy. It had taken over some hotels and a few other concerns when their private owners pulled out and the jobs of Jamaicans were at stake, the government pointed out.

Manley has in recent years attempted to mend fences with Washington, toning down his language and expectations.

His People's National Party (PNP) has had consistent dialogue with the Jamaican private sector and Manley has kept up the offensive returning to power.

Manley told the Americans that the first act after the election was to meet the Jamaican private sector to outline the government's views and promise its support.

Manley also said his government would lobby for congressional passage of legislation to expand the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), Washington's free trade arrangement for the countries of the region. "We considered that our earliest responsibility was to develop the greatest possible diplomatic support that we could marshall behind CBI II", Manley said.

Government Not Planning To Curb Imports

FL2402161889 Bridgetown CANA in English 1548 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Feb 24, CANA—Jamaica's industry and commerce minister, Claude Clarke, says the new administration here has no big plans for import restrictions and describes rumours to the contrary as "mischievous and malicious".

"There is no plan to restrict imports, particularly where these have become part of the Jamaican way of life," the official JAMPRESS News Agency on Thursday quoted Clarke as telling private sector leaders.

JAMPRESS also quoted Clarke as saying that he would establish an advisory council to help fully flesh out an import policy.

Michael Manley's People's National Party (PNP) government of the 1970's used bans and quantitative restriction on imports to deal with the country's trade deficit and serious balance of payments problems.

Import restrictions were lifted under the administration of Edward Seaga, who was prime minister for eight years until he was voted out in a general election last February 9.

Manley in opposition said the system of import regulation was difficult to manage and lent itself to corruption, and pledged that his new administration would not reintroduce it on any wholesale basis. It would prefer to use tariff measures to deal with low priority imports.

There has been recent talk here of Manley reintroducing bans and importing licensing, and Seaga mentioned at a news conference Wednesday that he had heard that 80 items were to be placed on a restricted list. But according to JAMPRESS, Clarke told the business leaders that import restrictions were not favoured by his government and that the policy to be developed by the council would "seek to inspire confidence and an atmosphere of greater enterprise".

Clarke also announced that a special task force headed by Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) president, John Thwaites, had been established to examine motor vehicle imports and the structures of the industry here. The present system, he said, bred corruption.

The task force would assess current demand for motor vehicles and make recommendations on ways of financing imports.

St Lucia

Prime Minister Speaks on Economic Performance

FL2402151189 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] St Lucian Prime Minister John Compton warned his countrymen not to place too many demands on the country's economy.

In a speech marking St Lucia's 10th anniversary of independence, Mr Compton said construction, agriculture, and other economic sectors are performing well but this could change if, he said, too many demands are placed on the economy.

Salinas Congratulates Presidents on Summit

PA2402182889 Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 16 Feb 89 p 6

[Text] Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari sent personal letters yesterday to the Central American presidents expressing the Mexican Government's satisfaction with the results of the Central American presidential summit in El Salvador. At that meeting, the Central American presidents reiterated their determination to continue to use diplomatic channels to overcome current difficulties and to achieve peace, democratization, and development with justice.

The Mexican president told his counterparts that an appropriate climate now prevails around the world to solve existing regional conflicts, and that their valuable efforts will undoubtedly continue to be recognized by the international community, in view of the need to eliminate all areas of conflict throughout the world.

The president reiterated to the area presidents the Mexican Government's willingness to continue to contribute, to the fullest extent possible and in strict compliance with the guidelines established by the countries of the region, to find formulas to establish the conditions for peace, security, democracy, and development of these nations.

Intelligence Chief Resigns for 'Personal' Reasons

PA2402224389 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1955 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Yesterday evening, Miguel Nassar Haro resigned his position as director general of intelligence services at the General Roads and Safety Secretariat in the Federal District. Sixty-year-old Nassar Haro, who had been in office 64 days, presented his resignation for personal reasons.

It is well-known that within a short period of time, Nassar Haro put an end to the 23 September Communist League and dismantled 27 criminal groups involving 260 criminals.

Bulgarian Legislator Visits Chamber of Deputies

PA2402171489 Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 18 Feb 89 p 5

[Text] Bulgarian National Assembly Deputy Elena Galadinova visited the Mexican Chamber of Deputies yesterday afternoon. During the visit, she praised the efforts Mexico has been making at international forums to promote a more just international economic order and to maintain world peace. The Bulgarian legislator was received by Deputies Hilda Anderson, Marcela Lombardo, and Teresa Chagoya.

Poland To Acquire Petroleum Technology

PA2402200989 Mexico City THE NEWS in English 22 Feb 89 p 35

[Text] Poland is interested in acquiring Mexican petroleum technology in order to modernize and amplify their refineries, according to a news release from the Secretariat of Energy (SEMIP). The economic interchange and cooperation is being considered with special interest in the areas of mining, petrochemicals, steel, and oil technology in general. The release states the bilateral collaboration could lead to the development of protected interchanges of technology with Poland.

Foreign Debt Decreases $403 Million in Dec

PA2602214089 Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 23 Feb 89 pp 1-A, 23-A

[Summary] The Finance and Public Credit Secretariat reported yesterday that Mexico's foreign debt at the end of 1988 amounted to $81.003 billion, a drop of $403.6 million in absolute value from the December 1987 figure.

The Finance Secretariat said the decline was the result of a relative increase of oil prices on international markets at the end of 1988, an increase in government funds, an increase in public savings, and a drop in inflation.

Parastate To Undergo $700-Million Remodeling

PA2602214589 Mexico City XHTV Television in Spanish 0200 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Summary] Eng (Alfredo Elias Ayub), under secretary of energy, mines and parastatal industry has announced the Mexican parastate company Altos Hornos de Mexico will be modernized at a cost of over $700 million. The funds will be obtained from the World Bank. The official said the remodeling is necessary to improve the quality of the steel that the company produces and to achieve levels of efficiency to render the products competitive on a worldwide basis.

El Salvador

Duarte Proposes Cease-Fire, Talks, Vote Delay

PA2702043889 San Salvador Domestic Service in Spanish 0207 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Speech by President Jose Napoleon Duarte in San Salvador—live or recorded]

[Text] Good evening, Salvadoran people. On 24 February, the Salvadoran political parties participating at the meeting in Oaxtepec, Mexico delivered to me the document they and the FMLN signed on 21 February. In that document, they commit themselves to studying the FMLN proposal in an overall manner and to offering the necessary contribution to the peace efforts as long as the Salvadoran executive and legislative branches agree to [word indistinct] the implementation of the actions contained in the proposal.

As Salvadoran president since 15 October 1984, when the La Palma dialogue took place, I have made many attempts to return peace to our country; therefore, I am pleased to see that the political parties clarified the purpose and potential for peace contained in the FMLN proposal, because that clarification helps us grant due importance to the proposal, in order to begin a new search that will help us to definitively end the armed conflict that has been staining our country with blood and that has brought 8 years of immense suffering to the Salvadoran people.

To fulfill the agreement signed by the political parties—which reads: With the urgency the case deserves, we agree to attempt immediately to promote a meeting between the Salvadoran Government and the FMLN with the presence of the political parties—I am willing to hold that meeting to find a way to reach a peace agreement within the framework of the Constitution. That agreement should also represent the strengthening of the democratic process, because once the organizations composing the groups up in arms join that process, we would have completed the cycle that began in 1982 [as heard]. That cycle was progressively expanded by the formation of new parties and by the current election process, which is further legitimized by the groups that [words indistinct] and the participation of two forces belonging to the FDR, which are now part of the so-called Democratic Convergence.

My insistence on demanding respect for the constitutional framework is not a subterfuge to evade responsibilities but an obligation inherent to my position as constitutional president, which obliges me under oath to faithfully comply with our Constitution and defend it above any other action carried out from this position. I must abide by it. [Words indistinct] that the Constitution is not merely a piece of paper, but reflects the sovereign will of the Salvadoran people, and that any transgression—in addition to making me responsible to the homeland and to you—would lead to an institutional crisis in our country after so many attempts to build the democratic institutions we Salvadorans now enjoy.

The Constitution itself states that sovereignty lies with the people. Therefore, we must seek how to overcome the problem stemming from the FMLN proposal and satisfactorily resolve the apparent contradiction between peace and the Constitution. The solution is possible by consulting the real owner of sovereignty: the people. In addition, I would like to remind the Salvadoran people that my mandate will end 1 June 1989 and that I must turn over the Presidency to whomever is elected by the people to assume the Presidency on that date. This circumstance limits my legal rights and actions to the extent that I cannot acquire obligations or commitments I will not be able to meet in due time.

Furthermore, my position is based on the spirit of the Esquipulas II peace agreement; the declaration of the OAS General Assembly held in San Salvador in November 1988, in which the hemisphere's highest forum condemned violence and terrorism as illegitimate ways to seek power; and the presidential summit held 13-14 of last month [as heard] in our country. On that occasion, the Central American presidents expressly said: The Central American presidents firmly reiterated the request—contained in provision five of the Esquipulas II agreement—to regional and extrarregional governments that openly or covertly supply aid to irregular forces or insurrectional groups in the area to immediately suspend that aid, with the exception of humanitarian aid that can contribute to the objectives outlined in this document. The presidents urged all sectors, particularly insurrectional groups and irregular forces operating in the area, to join the constitutional political processes in each country.

In that regard, I urge all Salvadorans to participate in the next elections. It is within that framework that I make the following proposal to the Salvadoran people, the Legislative Assembly, political parties, and the FMLN:

First: The government and the FMLN unilaterally decree an end of hostilities [que el gobierno y el FMLN decreten unilateralmente el cese de hostilidades] as of 0000 28 February 1989 until the end of my term on 1 June 1989.

Second: Once the previous point has been complied with, I urge the FMLN, as of 28 February 1989—I repeat, once the end of hostilities has been unilaterally complied with—to begin peace talks with us in Guatemala to achieve:

A. A definite end to the armed struggle;
B. The FMLN's formally joining the country's political and civilian life;
C. The recognition of the Salvadoran Armed Forces as the country's only armed force.

Third: I invite the Legislative Assembly to appoint three deputies, who together with three representatives of the executive branch, will compose part of the government commission that will carry out the peace talks with the FMLN. I also invite each political party to appoint one observer to attend the talks.

Fourth: The terms mentioned in the FMLN proposal go beyond the scope of my presidential powers and entail constitutional difficulties that must be solved. However, I have tried to find ways to make feasible a peaceful solution and remain within our constitutional and juridical structure and the spirit of our Constitution. Undoubtedly, the talks with the FMLN, the implementation of a mechanism to end hostilities, and the respective surveillance and controls are part of my powers.

However, they require time, and the 19 March elections restrict this. To increase this period of time, and bearing in mind the achievement of peace is an extremely important national goal and an exceptional force majeure, I request that the Legislative Assembly issue a statement to this effect. I also request that the political parties act according to the commitment signed in the declaration of Oaxtepec, Mexico in the part that reads, and I quote: The [words indistinct] contribution in what will be necessary for the peace process, that the government's executive and legislative branches accept possibilities of carrying out the proposal—end of quote. In this manner we could change the date of the elections, and I therefore propose 30 April 1989 as the date for holding elections.

Fifth: Within the framework of the agreements of Esquipulas II, Alajuela, and the agreement signed during the recent meeting held in El Salvador on 14 February, I request that the Central American presidents make the necessary efforts to ensure this peace plan will be carried out and the respective commissions for the verification and (?agreements) begin work as soon as possible.

Sixth: Achieving peace entails the moral and material reconstruction of our fatherland. Therefore, I appeal to international solidarity to provide us with the necessary help. I appreciate the cooperation granted to the government by our friends throughout the world. However, now more than ever before, as we conclude this peace effort, the nation will need generous contributions not only to achieve an end to violence, but also for the greater welfare of all Salvadorans.

Within the spirit of achieving peace, which requires the efforts and cooperation of the high branches of government, the political parties, the main institutions, and the Salvadoran people, I feel it is my duty as a citizen to point out other options that could [word indistinct] surpass the constitutional barriers.

The first possibility would be to call for a plebiscite, so the people would provide us with the necessary authority to adopt the decisions that entail modifying the [word indistinct] and conditions established in the Constitution.

The second possibility, for which there is already a precedent, would be to assume jointly with the high branches of state the commitment to find constitutional justifications for the agreements that may emerge regarding the peace agreements that will eventually be reached.

I am ready to help in any of these phases to ensure they are carried out.

Regarding the other [words indistinct], the possibility of issuing a decree [words indistinct] to facilitate the search for peace has been mentioned. In the event that the peace process I have proposed does not find the necessary political willingness to make it feasible, I hereby propose we hold a plebiscite so the people, who are sovereign, can decide their own destiny.

Salvadoran people, this proposal has been inspired by the strong desire for democracy and peace, with the hope that Salvadorans can achieve the progress and well-being that all the country's devoted children deserve [words indistinct]. I am not moved by personal ambition or pressures of any kind. I only seek the common good, which is the backbone of the doctrinaire constitution of the process [words indistinct], including the search for social harmony, to preserve peace and domestic tranquillity and the security of all peoples.

I ask God to permit the suffering Salvadoran people to achieve and secure the treasure of peace, harmony, and fraternal coexistence. This will be the greatest reward for a people who have offered so many lives—the promotion of a process that will permit them to live in liberty, peace, and democracy, and with a standard of living in keeping with the dignity of human beings.

Salvadoran people, this is my peace proposal. Good night.

Duarte May Travel to U.S. for Treatment

PA2402175089 Paris AFP in Spanish 1703 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] San Salvador, 24 Feb (AFP)—Salvadoran President Napoleon Duarte, who is suffering from terminal cancer, could travel to Washington on 10 March to continue treatment at the Walter Reed Military Hospital, official sources said today

Benjamin Interiano, one of Duarte's doctors, said the trip depends on the results of examinations that Duarte will undergo this weekend.

In spite of his poor health, Duarte continues to carry out his government obligations. He met today with a delegation of political parties that delivered a document signed this week at a meeting they held in Mexico City with FMLN guerrilla leaders.

Health at 'Critical Stage'

PA2502133289 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1206 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte has said his health is currently at a critical stage due to the last chemotherapy session he underwent. Duarte, 63, is suffering from terminal liver cancer, which has been treated with intensive chemotheraphy. The last treatment took place between 17 and 21 February.

I have to be very careful and watch my diet, the president stated after receiving delegates from 13 Salvadoran political parties at the presidential residence. Duarte undergoes chemotheraphy at night to avoid disrupting his presidential duties. Duarte underwent chemotheraphy twice in the United States.

Earlier this week, the president had a slight relapse as a result of a rejection of the chemotheraphy that had been postponed from December to February. According to Duarte's doctor, Jose Lizaga, the president's physical appearance and weight are quite good despite his illness.

In June 1988, doctors discovered that Duarte was suffering from advanced liver cancer. He underwent an operation in which the doctors had to remove more than two-thirds of his stomach. However, the president, who has not stopped working, has slightly improved over the past few months. It has even been said that he has overcome the cancer.

Government's Rejection of FMLN Proposal Cited

PA2702033389 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0052 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Station commentary: "A Viable Peace Proposal"]

[Text] The FMLN proposal to turn the elections into a path toward peace has generated great expectations within all sectors of our national life and the international community, who see that peace is possible if there is political willingness to guide the entire Salvadoran society toward a political solution to the conflict. This has been understood by the majority of the people and by the political parties who agreed in Mexico to make every effort to make possible a meeting between the Duartist regime and the FMLN to settle peace among Salvadorans. The international community is also aware of the FMLN efforts to change the current level of military confrontation into a political solution within the framework of elections without foreign intervention.

Meanwhile, the Duartist regime and the Armed Forces have rejected the FMLN proposal, demanding that our guerrilla forces lay down their weapons unconditionally, which is totally unrealistic.

At the same time, the current crisis within the government has become evident through statements concerning our proposal. Duarte has said the Assembly must define the situation, and then that the parties should, and, finally, he made the Central Electoral Council responsible. The Assembly has said the decision lies with the executive branch or in the Supreme Court of Justice. The Armed Forces have said it is the responsibility of the political parties or the Assembly. They are passing the ball to each other. However, the clearest position has been expressed by Vides Casanova, who threatened a coup if the proposal is accepted. This shows that the Army, which is the main power factor in the country, imposes its rejection of peace onto all national sectors. This only confirms the justness of our position that the Army's control of our national life must be reduced and limited to have true democracy.

The path to be followed is clear. We must intensify our struggle for peace in all sectors and incorporate new sectors in seeking a national consensus. We call on all political, patriotic, and grass-root sectors; [words indistinct] officers; and all our people to analyze the FMLN proposal and demand a concerted effort for peace with justice. The people's struggle must be intensified and encompass new sectors. Let us fight for the historical demands of our society!

Handal, Rey Prendes View FMLN Talks

PA2302221489 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0430 GMT 23 Feb 89

["Decision'89" political debate program with FMLN Commander Jorge Shafik Handal and Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes, Authentic Christian Movement presidential candidate, in Oaxtepec, Mexico on 22 February—live or recorded]

[Text] [Moderator] Commander Shafik: Are the agreements reached tonight what the FMLN was expecting? Could the political parties have committed themselves to doing more?

[Handal] We came to this meeting with the assumption that the political parties' participation in a meeting with the FMLN was a positive development. We came to this meeting to contribute to reaching a consensus which we believe is indispensable for peace, for implementing the peace proposal we announced on 23 January. We know that the political parties themselves do not have the power to decide on all the issues that are raised. However, we also know that reaching an understanding with the parties would be a first step that would open new possibilities for the peace offer we have made to quickly become a reality.

From that point of view, we believe that the agreements that have been reached are positive. We believe that the unanimous commitment by the parties has shown their recognition that, first, the FMLN proposal has potential to lead to peace; that is, that the FMLN has sincere intentions and a willingness to have peace; second, that there is a unanimous commitment to demand that the government and particularly the executive branch and Legislative Assembly immediately initiate talks with the FMLN to negotiate the points that will make it possible to implement the peace proposal.

[Moderator] Mr Rey Prendes, do you agree with this overall assessment of the political agreements signed tonight? Do you feel that the FMLN proposal provides a good opportunity to put a definite end to the war? Do you think that the political parties still have some objections to this proposal?

[Rey Prendes] I believe that, first, just the fact that the political parties met in San Salvador [as heard] is an important step, because this is the first time that all political forces have met to discuss a topic, and in this case a topic as important as peace. Second, I believe that the political parties' decision to meet here in Mexico with the FMLN to clear up their doubts is a significant step. Representatives of all Salvadoran ideologies sat down together and we managed to reach certain agreements.

Of course, not all political parties have the same ideas; not all political parties think the same way; not all political parties will simultaneously reach the conclusion that is hoped for—or at least that the Authentic Christian Movement [MAC] is expecting through this effort that is being made. I believe that the opportunities will become even more promising as we create a generalized enthusiasm for this proposal and particularly for the intention behind it.

That is why today and yesterday we worked under the premise that we had to make certain that this effort would lead to peace before we approached the issue of postponing or not postponing the elections. When there is a full conviction that this process will lead us to lasting and stable peace, a peace that will guarantee a permanent democratic process for all Salvadorans, then we will have sufficient moral backing to convince the political parties to postpone the elections.

I believe that the FMLN's remarks—given here and included in the documents presented—are guidelines showing that the FMLN has significantly changed its stand. At first, all political parties had doubts, but then they observed in the proposal that there were substantial changes in that first of all, the FMLN accepted the elections, second, that it decided to participate in the elections, and third, that it expressed its willingness to recognize the legitimate results of the elections.

Finally, after some consultations, the FMLN clearly established that this meant it was going to definitively put aside all violence. The FMLN told us that it would be absurd for someone to fire a shot after all requirements for the elections had been met. In addition, there is a guarantee ending hostilities, which is necessary. Then, to conclude, the FMLN mentions here recognizing only one army, and so forth. All of this begins to convince us that there are serious plans for seeking peace, and, to a certain extent, for joining civilian life and working together for the national reconstruction of El Salvador. The country urgently needs to put an end to violence and to initiate a period of peace. I think the conclusions and resolutions have been very productive, very effective, but most of all, the conscience of the majority of the Salvadoran people will allow the parties to evolve according to their own ideologies.

[Moderator] The list of commitments that were announced today—the full text of which has not been read in full or specifically explained—only refer to the intention of the political parties to ask that the government maintain direct talks with the FMLN. However, in your proposal, you tied the ending of hostilities to a period of 5 months, a time in which to organize the election campaign and dismantle the military operations. Is time, perhaps, the main obstacle to this proposal as we get closer to 19 March?

[Handal] Before answering your questions in detail, I would like to address a few issues raised by Rey Prendes.

It is not a matter of joining and accepting a process that is already in progress. We have said that our proposal is aimed at turning the elections into an instrument of peace. We do not believe that we can join the electoral process in El Salvador as it is now. It is necessary to change the nature of the elections, and to do this, a number of mutual agreements, guarantees, are needed, not only to ensure the safety of the participants, but to allow the Salvadoran people to use this instrument to achieve their own goals and objectives. In essence, the elections should be a genuine democratic instrument.

We have talked about the need to reach a cease-fire agreement. It should be an agreement between the FMLN and the Armed Forces. Unilateral cease-fires do not work. We have also said that the Armed Forces should stay in their barracks during the elections. The FMLN will also withdraw its armed personnel from voting centers. We have stressed the need to consider the possibility of allowing Salvadorans abroad to exercise their voting rights. We base our demands on the fact that hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans, who left our country as a result of persecution and depopulation policies implemented by the Army in vast regions of the country, must have a say. They have the right to express their opinion in these elections.

We have also said the electoral code must be reformed to allow everyone an opportunity and to ensure the honesty of the elections. We have called for the creation of an independent group capable of organizing international supervision of the electoral process, etc. These are things that should be negotiated with the government and the Legislative Assembly. We believe if this happens, the elections could become an instrument of peace.

We have also said that this process should lead to the creation of conditions to end the war once and for all. We believe a logical result of this would be an end to the war. This would open a new era in our country in which the people's objectives would be realized. This is what we are taking into account. We believe we are at a crossroads. One of the roads is the one we are proposing, the other is the worsening of the armed conflict. As for those who reject the FMLN proposal—and we have heard the statements made by the top leadership of the Armed Forces in this regard— we believe the political parties should be praised for meeting with us despite the viewpoints expressed by the Armed Forces.

We know about the Armed Forces' decision to oppose the implementation of our proposal. This would lead to the worsening of the war, because if they insist on closing this road, we must assume they are planning to enhance their military strength.

Colonel Rene Emilio Ponce [chairman of the Salvadoran Joint Chiefs of Staff] said it clearly. He said an effort should be made to remove the cancer; he said the FMLN should be militarily defeated. Of course the Army has not been able to do it, and now it is even further from accomplishing that task.

[Moderator] Let us stay on the subject.

[Rey Prendes] I wonder why Commander Handal tried to refute my statements on the democratic process, because everything he mentioned dealt with a permanent effort by all parties to purify and to improve the democratic process. The proposal to allow Salvadorans living abroad to vote is an old proposal from the Salvadoran Popular Party, PPS. In addition, the call for a stronger investigating committee to oversee the process has been the struggle of all the parties that have not had representation in the Central Electoral Council.

Therefore, I really see no difference between his statements on how to improve and guarantee a genuinely democratic process and the actions that actually have been implemented to improve or to try to improve the situation.

There is an important aspect that is at the very heart of all this; he mentioned it. This must serve as a mechanism, as an instrument, to ensure that the people's aspirations are met. This must not simply serve as an instrument to elect so-and-so, to elect a deputy to the Assembly, or anyone to the Presidency. This must be an instrument to allow the people to satisfy their aspirations.

I am saying this because what he said is quite different than what I actually said. I believe that he simply shares all the aspirations that political parties have always had, and this makes me very happy because we have a new outlook, one that is different than our previous one.

We have worked seriously toward achieving permanent peace. This is perhaps the most important time of the entire conflict, because the FMLN has made its decision; it has adopted a new position. This position certainly does not mean that I will recognize what you have said here many times. It is not a weak position. As he said, it is not a position acknowledging anyone's victory, but one acknowledging that we all are working together to achieve peace.

It is being said that the elections are an instrument; of course they are, just as weapons were instruments to achieve power at a given time. Elections are an instrument; they are not the goal; they are not democracy. This is absolutely clear to us. Democracy is much more than that.

The entire process that has emerged in El Salvador—especially regarding the freedom of speech which allows people to express their opinions, for there is a permanent debate in all the media—is one of the most important developments—perhaps much more important than the election process itself. It [the media] not only keeps them informed; the people are also beginning to use the media, which now allows people to express their needs over different radio and television programs and in the press.

I believe that this is not a triumph of either the Armed Forces or the FMLN. It is the triumph of an ideal, the ideal of forging a new society, one that is different than the society that they [the FMLN] decided to change one day as they headed into the mountains. It is an effort, I repeat, it is the triumph of an ideal. It is the triumph of the ideal of forging a society in which we cannot only live peacefully and without violence, but one in which we can really feel that we are determining our own fate.

[Moderator] Rey Prendes has already talked about the democratic process. What can you tell us about this, Commander Handal?

[Handal] Rey Prendes' statements mixed reality with the way things should be and with people's aspirations. He mixes ideals with reality and does not really refer to the current reality. He is extremely condescending when talking about the way things are in the country. He talks about aspirations in a very vigorous manner, though. He mixes reality with the way people would like things to be in such a way that at a certain moment aspirations get confused with the way things really are. The reality is completely different than the aspirations of the so-called democratic process. There is increasing repression.

Social organizations do not enjoy the freedom to which Rey Prendes referred. There is an increasing number of murders. The death squads are active. There is repression in the rural areas, and everybody knows about it except for the media. There is extreme poverty and there are very serious social problems. People are very unhappy and the elections have been losing prestige. The procedures for the elections have not been improving, and, therefore, the credibility of the elections has not been enhanced among the population. During the 1980's, elections have been losing prestige. The number of people not voting has been rising. The number of blank and voided ballots cast by those who are forced to vote, because of work-related or other reasons, is very high and continues to rise. The truth is that in the most recent elections, the third political force in the country has been represented by the blank and voided votes.

This must change. If there is something to be changed, it is this reality. If there is a party such as the PPS, which proposed that Salvadoran citizens living abroad be allowed to vote, the authorities should not be concerned with who made that same proposal before and who did not. We are not fighting over the authorship of that proposal. What should matter is that Salvadorans living abroad do not have the right to vote. The possibility of voting does not exist for them. What matters is that the most recent elections have taken place within an atmosphere of repression. That is what we are talking about.

It is a fact that the FMLN proposal added a new dynamic to the process. That is very important and the various parties have admitted it. This helps, and the various parties agree on that. Not all the parties agree, of course. I agree with what Rey Prendes said about agreement among parties. The political parties do not adopt a single position and do not reach agreements.

We believe the various political parties have seen an opportunity to improve and transform the elections into something different, into something that could be used as an instrument by the entire nation, into something that cannot be used by one party against another party. They have seen this opportunity thanks to the dynamics created by the FMLN proposal. I am not saying all parties think of the elections in these terms, but it is a fact that before the 1980's, and during the 1980's, there was one major voter, which was not really the people but the Army. The Army has interests that are not the interests of the nation as a whole. The Army decides who can and who cannot win the elections in our country. It decides who can be tolerated as a winner and who cannot be tolerated. The various parties participate in the elections knowing this. We believe that attitude proves that to have democracy in our country, that situation must change. The Armed Forces must become an institution subordinated to civilian power. The Armed Forces must guarantee democracy, and it must be an instrument at the service of the interests of the entire nation. It must stop being an instrument used by one part of the nation against another part of the nation.

[Moderator] Let us discuss what Commander Handal just mentioned. I would also like to know something about the role the Armed Forces would play during a process of negotiations. In your opinion, Mr Rey Prendes, what would be the Armed Forces' reaction to a possible process of negotiations and to what extent is the cease-fire that was proposed by the FMLN feasible?

[Rey Prendes] First of all, when one is trying to reach a consensus, or when one is trying to get two sides to agree, one must rule out things that are said to cover appearances, or those things that do not make a positive contribution. When I read the FMLN's proposal and its five whereas points, I disregarded the whereas points. I did not want to read them because they constitute an attack on a number of things that all of us who participate in the democratic process regard as untrue. Therefore, we felt that if we had considered those things and criticized the expressions of force and violent criticism, we would never reach a consensus. I looked for things that could really unite us. I say that because the Armed Forces' statement that the Constitution must be obeyed and that they will not tolerate violations of the Constitution must be viewed from a positive standpoint. If we are negative and accuse the Armed Forces of interfering in the democratic process, of being aggressive, and of being the only ones that make decisions, and if we say that we must change things so that civilians rule, we will bring about a negative confrontation, which tends to prevent a consensus.

I understand the Armed Forces' remarks the way I choose to understand them. They said the Constitution must be respected. I wholeheartedly agree. We have sought a reasonable solution, but one that is not mentioned in the Constitution. This solution would be beyond the parameters of the Constitution but would not violate it. So if there are no candidates for the presidential elections, we would have to deal with that fact. The immediate goal would not be to install an elected president if there are no candidates. What can we do in such a situation? We looked for a constitutional way to handle these extraordinary circumstances and we discovered references to naming a provisional president in cases when there is no president-elect. Perhaps the Constitution meant to apply this provision to cases of another sort, but faced with the current situation, we find this solution feasible if it would help peace.

Here we have values, such as the search for peace, which supercede our own narrow-mindedness. I believe that the Armed Forces have not assumed the role of judge to dictate the way things should be done. Of course, here we are dealing with a process. I understand Commander Handal. He is at the front facing the Armed Forces, which also study the military problem. Therefore, it is very difficult for one of the sides in the armed struggle to suddenly believe that the other side will behave differently, no matter who the two sides are.

The Armed Forces' doubts are much stronger than those of the political parties. We have seen that some political parties to protect their own interests lack the daring or determination that other political parties have. In the context of the role they must play in society, the Armed Forces harbor a number of doubts that must be dispelled. They must feel certain that they are building and strengthening the democratic and constitutional process instead of destroying it. All of this entails, of course, a process of chance. We are not going to suddenly change our minds about who is good and who is bad. No one is going to change miraculously or by intervention from the Holy Spirit. Facing the facts is what often drives people to do things here. Reality is what makes this or that group change from one side to the other, or from supporting one segment of society instead of another. Views that yesterday were regarded as good may now appear to be bad or different. As our comrades like to say: One has to adapt to differing circumstances to be able to reach decisions at some point.

I do not consider the Armed Forces an obstacle. Of course, the Armed Forces' professionalism, which has made great progress, must become stronger every day. I would like to say that the turning point in the Armed Forces' mentality happened in 1979, when they made the simple yet important decision not to exert direct pressure in favor of a specific political party.

They made the decision, of course, because they were facing a subversive war at that time. I believe we have all contributed to events in the country. Perhaps the positive things that have occurred in Salvadoran society would not have taken place if violence had not errupted. That is why I say that all the misfortune experienced by the country is leading us to things that are positive, new, and better. I believe we should see events in such a light and not present them in a negative manner. For this reason, I want to say that I have great hopes that we will be able to start promptly to build our democratic process and that together we will achieve positive solutions for the country's most pressing problems.

[Handal] I partially agree with Rey Prendes' observations on priorities and possibilities for finding solutions that he called extraconstitutional and that are not unconstitutional. We agree with him on all these topics, and I believe these are the topics we have been discussing over the past few days. It seems to me that Rey Prendes, as well as other participants, have contributed to the advances made. We really agree on these points.

He, however, insists on opposing statements that perhaps he believes are harsh, but that I would say are realistic about the situation we have to change. My statements do not imply that I believe the situation cannot be changed. First of all, I have not referred to the Armed Forces as a whole but to those who make decisions in the Armed Forces. Second, these are realities that all Salvadorans have witnessed. How my statements are interpreted is a matter of politics. These, however, are realities and we have to see how they are to be resolved.

The parties, lacking a certain degree of credibility, have requested that we give them explanations and clarifications regarding our positions, and we have done so. We also have sufficient reasons not to have confidence in the Government or in the Armed Forces commanders. We need to enter a negotiation process specifically to clarify these points. We are not going to ask the Government or the Armed Forces to give us explanations. Their explanations should be provided in conjunction with those of the country's political parties and social forces.

All these position statements, however, must lead to agreements that will make advances feasible and to finding practical ways to implement the peace proposal we have presented. This will require more than explanations. This will require negotiations and negotiations constitute a clarification process where positions must be established and a consensus reached. After that, the agreements reached must be implemented. This process brings forth the political wills of the sectors involved. It is a process that will strengthen or weaken the sectors' credibility. We are confronted with this challenge at this time. These are the expectations once the parties reach an agreement.

I would describe what has happened recently as follows: We addressed our proposal to the government—that is to the Executive Branch, to the Legislative Assembly, and to the Armed Forces Command and Staff. The Armed Forces commanders did nothing with our proposal for 15 days. The Government and the Legislative Assembly passed the ball—figuratively speaking—to the political parties. The political parties were courageous and had the civic integrity to take our proposal seriously. They studied and discussed our proposal thoroughly, and they asked us to clarify certain aspects of it. We have responded to their efforts to reach a consensus, and because we believed that their doubts and questions were legitimate. That is why we responded to their queries. The parties then agreed to meet with us to continue discussing the explanations we had given them and to search for agreements that would allow the process to advance. We have achieved this goal. As I have said, we have all contributed to these discussions—some more, some less. I agree that Rey Prendes made a big contribution in helping to achieve these advances and the result has been this agreement.

Now, this agreement entails a commitment. We have unanimously agreed on the main points on what are.... [changes thought] That is, where will the negotitations lead on each of the proposal's points. We already have differences about the points, but we also have differences on how to interpret the Constitution. There are some interpretations that are very restrictive, especially the interpretation of the Christian Democratic Party. It

leaves very narrow margins and allows practically nothing to be done. It does not want the situation to change. It was noteworthy that other parties—I would say most parties but not all of them presented a legal interpretation—had broader interpretations of the Constitution.

Mr Rey Prendes has made a very brief interpretation here that—more than being a legal interpretation—has been made from the point of view of assigning priority to values, from the political perspective, and from an interest in making progress toward peace. We agree on that. That is the challenge we will face and that is what the expectations are. Now then, will this occur by itself? Will the results come to fruition on their own? I do not think so. I think we have to make an effort and that we have committed ourselves to doing that. However, in addition to the political parties, the Salvadoran people now have the opportunity to influence this decisionmaking process that will pave the way to peace.

[Moderator] What would the political parties have to do to make sure that this agreement does not become a mere declaration of principles or goodwill? A few minutes ago, I also asked you what you thought of the end to hostilities as proposed by the FMLN. Is this feasible or not?

[Rey Prendes] Well, I think this is all part of an overall answer. One cannot talk about an end to hostilities if we are not talking about peace or elections. We are talking about an entire process that entails sitting down to talk about everything.

I would like to touch on a subject that was discussed today. Unfortunately, I do not agree very much with the explanation that was given about this being the most adequate time for presenting the proposal. I think the FMLN presented this proposal somewhat late. This has rushed us a bit, in view of circumstances. I am sure that Commander Handal's opinion is entirely different. He said this was the best time. I am sure that if the FMLN had presented the proposal 5 or 6 months prior to the scheduled election day, then it would have been easier to carry this out.

I do not think this is the best time. The FMLN did not choose it just because it was close to the U.S. inauguration day, although that is very important. I have already had a very harsh experience in that regard. However, I do want to point out that there have been other circumstances that lead us to the conclusion that this was the path to follow at this specific time. I believe that there is not only the issue of an end to hostilities but also the issue of the guarantees to which everyone has a right. This is one of the things I insisted on during the meeting. Guarantees during the elections are not enough. The MAC proposed some mechanisms whereby the international community could participate in order to guarantee the arrangements that have been made. We could even use the mechanisms that are included in the Esquipulas II plan, such as some method of supervision and guarantees to help the political parties.

Here we also have a problem of financing and of political party operations. The war costs millions. I believe the political parties have made a tremendous economic effort to participate in the elections—and I am referring to all of the parties, in one way or another—and there should be some incentive. If we are going to wage another election campaign that is going to wear us out, and if the international community feels that the equitable participation and rights of the political parties to present their proposals is more valuable, then there should be some cooperation with the parties participating in the elections.

I am referring to a number of guarantees that are needed. The FMLN has brought up some of these guarantees, and I think we must study them. These cannot be ruled out. These are guarantees for coexistence. These cannot be accepted just like that. Sometimes points of view are different in the real world. Sometimes our positions are totally different. However, we must understand that if we are going to build peace, everyone has to feel, in one way or another, that there are guarantees.

I would like for us to be more brief in our remarks, because we have little time left, and sometimes we repeat a lot. I ask the comrade to be brief so that we can move on more quickly.

[Moderator] Well, in fact, here is the last question of this debate for each of you: There was a point discussed at this meeting in Mexico, which in fact was considered by the press and political observers in general as a crucial point in the FMLN proposal. You, for example, talked about the attitude of the Armed Forces toward the FMLN proposal. In the most recent FMLN statement, the FMLN commits itself to establishing a permanent cease-fire as long as a series of conditions, including an Armed Forces personnel reduction and the elimination of the security corps, takes place. You request other things as well.

Do you believe your proposal is realistic? Do you think it is possible to attain these things through negotiations? Do you believe your proposal is feasible? How will the FMLN dismantle its military units?

[Handal] We believe it is perfectly possible to negotiate all these things. In addition, our proposal represents not only our opinion, but the opinion of other groups, including foreign groups. We believe all that can be negotiated and agreements can be reached if there is a true willingness to find solutions and to build a better future. We must not only think of the present but also of the way we want our future to be.

Rey Prendes just criticized me for using too much time to answer. I know how to measure time too, and it seems to me he also gives long answers.

I would like to comment on a series of things he just said. We agree with him on many of these things. It is true that it is not only a matter of stopping the shooting. We must begin facing all the country's problems. To do that, the conditions and guarantees to which we referred must exist. With time, these guarantees would turn into favorable conditions for solving our problems. We agree that the efforts made by the political parties to turn the elections into an instrument of peace need support, including financial support.

By offering to agree to a cease-fire during the entire election campaign, we are contributing to turning the elections into an instrument of peace. I think our contribution also has economic effects. In view of our cease-fire declaration, the government would be in a position to release funds that would otherwise be used to finance the war and would be able to use them to strengthen elections process, which will lead us to peace. We agree on all this.

If we think in terms of the future, as we said here at this meeting and in collective and bilateral meetings, we must begin dialogues and exchanges of views to study points of agreement in order to improve the country's future. We must be aware that peace will bring many social problems.

[Rey Prendes] To reduce the number of Armed Forces members and to dismantle guerrilla movements during peace time is a problem. We are not only thinking about the soldiers but also about the members of the guerrilla movement.

A process for their reincorporation must be prepared. They must be received in this manner—psychologically speaking—not only by the country, which is very important, but by all as Salvadorans. We must think about what the Armed Forces soldiers are going to do when they rejoin civilian society. And how about the fighters? They must have jobs, housing, and so forth. We must provide all this. There are already some specific projects planned for when peace is achieved and, naturally, this is something that the FMLN has proposed as some sort of a guarantee or condition. I think this is logical.

The FMLN then speaks about not proposing certain things in a negative manner, because one tends to react in a negative manner. It is not a matter of abolishing the security corps—as the proposal stipulated—but what the FMLN means is that the security corps should be turned over to the civilian authorities and should no longer belong to the Armed Forces. That has been a long struggle, from a strictly technical point of view. There is now a school for training police officers. It is not logical for a battalion commander to become traffic department director or for the chief of the Judicial Police to be assigned to a battalion. In other words, the corps must be specialized. There has been a trend in this direction, but there is resistance to this by some sectors. I do not think this should be the case.

This is a process on which we can reach an agreement. There are some constitutional aspects that can be solved within the next 2 years, if there is a willingness to do so. We discussed this to a certain extent with all the political parties, and I think there is the possibility and willingness to move in this direction. Therefore, I think that we can overcome the obstacles.

The other point that seems to be more complicated is that there appear to be stipulations regarding those who have committed crimes. As Commander Handal puts it, a purge of certain elements in the Armed Forces. During this meeting, he said that what the FMLN wants is a guarantee, a guarantee not only for the FMLN—he said—but for society, for everyone. This was brought up as a desire for guaranteeing society a judicial process in this regard.

I think all of these things are natural. If we are optimistic and begin to move forward, we will begin to realize that we can achieve true peace. At that point, I think things will get easier. If we are pessimistic, we will begin to criticize and act with distrust—which is how the FMLN sometimes feels in regard to the Armed Forces high command, and I am sure the Armed Forces also feels great distrust toward the FMLN command. If we act based on distrust, we are not going to get anywhere. We must part with a sense of good faith, and we must start to build. I think that is the effort that the political parties have made; as Shafik said, some more than others.

I regret that some politicial parties have never given this issue the importance it deserves. Their presidential candidates did not attend any of these meetings. In keeping with the spirit of this Mexico meeting, I am not going to mention any names; but when I get back to El Salvador, I am going to do so. The truth is that this has not been given the attention it deserves, but I believe and I hope that from now on it will assigned the necessary importance.

[Moderator] We now conclude this debate and thank Commander Shafik Handal, of the FMLN General Command, and Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes, MAC presidential candidate, for having joined us tonight in this interesting debate. We thank our viewers for watching, and we invite you to tune in again next Wednesday for "Decision'89." Good night.

Vides To Consider Armed Forces Reductions

PA2502002989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2329 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] San Salvador, 24 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Salvadoran Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova today considered the possibility of reducing the number of military troops if the guerrillas join the democratic process.

Vides stated that "if the guerrillas put down their weapons, we will not need as many soldiers. The number of troops would gradually be reduced until it reached a number that would guarantee the defense and sovereignty of El Salvador's territory."

Vides referred to this possibility during a meeting between President Jose Napoleon Duarte, the Armed Forces staff, and representatives of 13 political parties. The party representatives, who had met earlier this week with FMLN leaders to discuss a possible postponement of the upcoming 19 March elections, presented Duarte with a document on the FMLN proposal.

The party representatives promised the FMLN that they would try to arrange an immediate meeting between the rebels and authorities from the three branches of government to negotiate an end to the war.

In the document submitted to Duarte, the FMLN expressed that it is willing to put down its weapons, join political life, and recognize a single army if an agreement can be reached with the Armed Forces.

In exchange, the FMLN asked for a reduction in the number of troops, trial and punishment of soldiers involved in assassinations, and the disbanding of the security forces and their integration into a single institution under civilian control.

This rebel proposal is added to the FMLN's offer to accept the results of the elections if they are postponed from 19 March to 15 September while a new electoral framework that will guarantee honest elections is negotiated.

The president stressed that the rebel proposal "must be discussed and analyzed thoroughly by all the branches of government."

"What is clear," Duarte said, "is that on 1 June I have to turn over power to a new president. The Constitution establishes that I cannot stay in office 1 more day after that."

Duarte said that "the parties must be consulted to evaluate the proposal in all its dimensions."

Francisco Merino, vice presidential candidate of the right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), said he hopes the talks with the FMLN will continue even after the elections.

Honduras

AID Plane Carrying Contra Supplies Crashes

Initial Search Unsuccessful

PA2602043989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0359 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 25 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Police sources have reported that a DC-6 cargo plane, believed to be manned by four crewmen and carrying aid to the Nicaraguan contras, disappeared today some 20 km east of Tegucigalpa.

It is believed that the airplane crashed on some part of La Tigra mountain, near the Honduran capital.

The airplane had been chartered by the U.S. Agency for International Development [AID] from a private Honduran company to carry humanitarian aid to the eastern part of the country, where it is distributed to the contras.

The DC-6 had contacted the Tegucigalpa control tower and was expected to arrive at 1500 (2100 GMT).

Honduran Armed Forces helicopters have flown over the area without success, so several patrols will search the region on foot on Sunday, with the support of civilian and military aircraft.

DC-6's are four-engine cargo planes that date from World War II. They normally carry a four-man crew: pilot, copilot, flight engineer, and purser [sobrecargo].

The names of the people on the airplane have not been released in Tegucigalpa.

Wreckage Located 25 Feb

PA2602182789 Paris AFP in Spanish 1738 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 26 Feb (AFP)—The Honduran National Civil Aeronautics Service today reported that a plane that had just dropped aid to the "contras" in Honduras and which was chartered by the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) crashed yesterday and at least three people were killed.

The accident—the cause of which is unknown—occurred at approximately 1400 on Saturday, after the aircraft had dropped aid to 13,000 anti-Sandinist fighters and 25,000 relatives who have settled in eastern El Paraiso Department, on the border with Nicaragua.

The Honduran Air Force found the plane, a DC-6, Saturday afternoon approximately 18 km northeast of Tegucigalpa in a mountainous region between La Tigra and Valle de Angel. However, no bodies have been found.

It is presumed that in addition to the three crew members, another 10 people who had been hired to drop the cargo were killed in the crash. However, the Civil Aeronautics office only has in its registry the names of pilot Rene Gonzalez, copilot Juan Ramon Caceres, and flight engineer Wilfredo Castro, all Hondurans.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Anne Sigmud said there were no Americans on the plane.

The aircraft belonged to a Honduran business, Circle G, owned by Gonzalez.

13 Bodies Recovered

PA2602230189 Paris AFP in Spanish 2131 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 26 Feb (AFP)—Press sources have reported that rescue teams today located the bodies of 13 people who yesterday boarded a plane leased by AID to carry supplies for the Nicaraguan "contras" in eastern Honduras.

The aircraft, a private DC-6, was returning yesterday from San Andres de Bocay, Olancho Department, on the border with Nicaragua, when it crashed while flying over the mountainous region of La Tigra, approximately 28 km from the Honduran capital, according to Civil Aeronautics officials.

According to official reports, only three individuals were registered to board the plane: pilot Rene Gonzalez, copilot Juan Ramon Caceres, and flight engineer Wilfredo Castro.

However, authorities later confirmed the death of another 10 people, all Honduran citizens, who were aboard the aircraft.

Residents in the area and reporters who traveled to the site of the accident this morning said the rescue teams found 13 bodies, some of them mutilated, scattered over a wide area.

Honduran authorities have not yet clarified the circumstances or the reasons why the 10 passengers who also died in the accident were aboard the plane.

According to preliminary reports, those passengers reportedly traveled to help with the airdrop of supplies for approximately 13,000 anti-Sandinist rebels stationed in Honduran territory.

Although the cause of the accident is unknown, authorities of the National Aeronautics Service said it could have been caused by bad weather.

In statements to local radio stations, residents in the area said it is possible one of the engines may have failed.

They said the aircraft was completely destroyed, one of the engines crashed in the high part of a valley, and the rest of the plane and the bodies of the 13 occupants were scattered in the surrounding areas.

Army Seizes 'Guerrilla Arms Cache' 24 Feb

PA2402160889 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 0411 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] During an operation conducted by 4th Infantry Battalion troops, the Army has discovered a guerrilla arms cache inside a private home located near the U.S. Standard Fruit Company.

Approximately 170,000 pounds of explosives were confiscated. Some of them were used in the explosion that occurred near one of the fences around the U.S. Standard Fruit Company building in La Ceiba. According to our reports, the Army search took place tonight.

Members of the 4th Infantry Battalion are completing the operation right now and we will have more details soon. The troops also made some arrests during the operation.

Military Communique Issued

PA2402191189 San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 24 Feb 89 p 12

["Communique" issued by the 1st Military Region Headquarters in La Ceiba, Atlantida Department; date not given]

[Text] The headquarters of the 1st Military Region, which is located at the 4th Infantry Battalion in La Ceiba, Atlantida Department, in view of the latest terrorist acts, including the one that took place today in this city, announces the following to the public:

A container with approximately 170,000 pounds of explosive was discovered today in La Ceiba. The explosives were to be used by subversive groups to continue the chain of terrorist acts that have been sowing unrest in our country. Forceful actions will be taken against any organization that tries to undermine our nation's democratic system.

Likewise, the people should know that the Armed Forces are very alert and will not tolerate any destabilizing actions. The Armed Forces urge the people to stay calm and to report to the nearest authority any person or persons that plot against the nation's security.

Signed at the 4th Infantry Battalion headquarters, 1st Military Region Command under Colonel Erick Sanchez

'Cache' Belongs to Oil Company

PA2502194489 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 1904 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 25 Feb (REUTER)—Local media reported today that a large cache of explosives, which according to a Honduran colonel were to be used by guerrillas, actually belongs to an oil firm. Today's issue of the independent newspaper [San Pedro Sula] TIEMPO carried the front-page headline: "A Hoax on the Armed Forces—Military Intelligence Searches for 'More' Explosives."

Colonel Erick Sanchez said Thursday that the Armed Forces had found 85 tons of explosives in a guerrilla hideout near the Caribbean port of La Ceiba.

Local media reported today that the house where the explosives were found belongs to a brother of Armed Forces Commander General Humberto Regalado and his wife and that the material belongs to the U.S. Geosource Company, which is searching for oil in eastern Honduras.

Sanchez reported Thursday night that the explosives "were to be used by subversive groups to continue the wave of terrorist attacks that have sown panic in our country."

Last week four bombs exploded in Honduras, injuring 13 people, including 3 U.S. soldiers. None of the bombs were very large.

The Armed Forces blamed subversives tied to international communism for the attacks. Leftist groups claim that the Army is trying to spawn a crisis to pave the way for a military coup.

Leftist Group Claims Bomb in San Pedro Sula

PA2602173589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1656 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] San Pedro Sula (Honduras), 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—A medium-sized bomb exploded last night in San Pedro Sula, but it only caused damage to an electric tower southeast of this city. The EEC, Central American, and Contadora Group foreign ministers are scheduled to meet in this city on Monday and Tuesday.

The Morazanist Patriotic Front [Frente Patriotico Morazanista] has claimed responsibility for the attack. The organization also claimed responsibility for several bombs that exploded in Tegucigalpa and other cities during the last 2 weeks.

The rebel movement is protesting U.S. intervention in Honduras, according to the printed messages that the police claim were found at the site of the explosion.

The device exploded at 2130 (0330 GMT) in the Las Palmas neighborhood southeast of San Pedro Sula.

The police and the Army have doubled their security measures around the Copantl Sula Hotel, site of the ministerial meeting—better known as "San Jose V."

26 Feb Shoot-Out Reported

PA2602202089 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1944 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Excerpt] San Pedro Sula (Honduras), 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—On the eve of the fifth meeting of the EEC, Central American, and Contadora Group foreign ministers in San Pedro Sula, a bomb exploded last night and a shoot-out occurred today near the hotel where representatives of European delegations and reporters are staying.

The leftist Morazanist Patriotic Front claimed responsibility for the attacks. This front condemns the U.S. presence in Honduras and the United States' Central American foreign policy.

In the wake of these incidents, the Honduran police and Army doubled their security measures in the hotel where the foreign ministers will meet on Monday and Tuesday to discuss a political and economic plan to relaunch the process for economic integration in Latin America. [passage omitted]

Congress President on Bombings' 'Internal' Causes

PA2402181089 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 23 Feb 89 p 8

[Text] Tegucigalpa—According to National Congress President Carlos Orbin Montoya, the recent bomb explosions were not carried out by left-wing guerrillas, but stem from internal conflicts.

"The recent terrorist upsurge in the country stems from internal causes that are linked to the incident at the Central Penitentiary and drug trafficking, not to political and ideological problems," Montoya noted.

He regretted that while in El Salvador talks are held to achieve peace, the frequent acts of violence in Honduras are linked to internal matters.

The Congress president announced that amendments to the Honduran Armed Forces charter will be approved so that soldiers can reinforce the police.

Asked if this action means a state of siege in the country's major cities, he said it does not because the Constitution guarantees freedom of movement and the sanctity of homes.

"We are not trying to create a state of siege at all. We simply want the Army to support the understaffed Public Security Force [FUSEP] when the FUSEP requests it," the Congress president noted.

Montoya said during an impromptu news conference held yesterday that he visited some South American countries and told several presidents that Honduras is the victim of its neighbors' many political problems.

Referring to the dismantling of the contras, one of the points agreed on during the latest Central American presidents summit, he said it can be carried out through different means, including the Sandinist regime granting amnesty to the rebels.

Regardless of whether the Nicaraguan Government complies with the commitments it made at the Salvadoran summit, he added, "our country will fulfill its commitments to show the world we are the victims of the political problems in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama."

With that statement, Montoya hinted that the Nicaraguan rebel camps in Honduras have to be dismantled to improve Honduras' image abroad.

Military Police Patrol Tegucigalpa Streets

PA2402193789 Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 24 Feb 89 p 4

[Text] Military policemen patrolled the Honduran capital's main streets and public and private buildings yesterday to avert any new terrorist attacks, acts which have scorched the country in the past 6 days, causing 13 injuries and millions in property damage.

EL HERALDO personnel confirmed that military policemen patrolled throughout the capital yesterday to guarantee public tranquillity, as fear has gripped Tegucigalpa in the past 2 days.

This was done although the National Congress has not yet given the "green light" to amendments to the law that established the Armed Forces. If these amendments are approved, the Army, in addition to its normal duties, "would be empowered and have the ability to assume police duties to reinforce the public security forces."

The plan to give certain police duties to the military is opposed by National Party leader Rafael Leonardo Callejas Romero. He is requesting heavier police presence to stop a wave of attacks on public and private property, which continued yesterday in La Ceiba with an explosion at the installations of the Standard Fruit banana company.

Nevertheless, a Presidency communique issued Wednesday evening stated that "the Armed Forces will use all its force to guarantee public tranquillity, security of people and property, and validate democracy as the form of government that Hondurans have chosen through the civilized means of elections."

As part of the special guard duties assumed yesterday by the military policemen, who were deployed from batallions near the capital, many people were arrested for wearing clothes that are considered to be for the military's exclusive use.

Army Communique Refutes PDCH Charges

PA2502025189 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 0152 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Communique issued by Armed Forces Public Relations Directorate; date and place not given]

[Text] The Armed Forces Public Relations Directorate reports the following to the local and international public:

1. It regrets the capricious and ill-intentioned interpretation that the current national leadership of the Honduran Christian Democratic Party [PDCH] has given to the Army's civic and responsible attitude of going into the streets to support the work of surveillance, security, and order that the Public Security Force [FUSEP] is carrying out to protect citizens.

2. We absolutely reject the characterization and interpretation given by the PDCH leadership of this action, since the Army's presence may be regarded by the local and foreign public as a repressive action against the Honduran people. The Army's presence is, in fact, a response to the demands of the overwhelming majority of the people, who are are anxious to continue living in an atmosphere of peace, democracy, and freedom and whose principles are being threatened by a handful of unpatriotic elements who want to surrender our country to foreign goals and interests.

3. We believe and contend that the wave of violence, crime, and terror that members of the Honduran left wing linked to the Communist International are trying to sow in our country must be firmly condemned by all the people. At this moment, each Honduran must stand behind our police and Army to fight and stamp out this great danger, which threatens to destroy our peace, freedom, and democracy as has regretably been done in neighboring countries.

4. We ask all citizens to remain calm because, conscious of their responsibilities and adhering to the laws of the Republic, the Armed Forces are at all times ready to safeguard public order and tranquillity. Our Army and police will at all times protect the honest and responsible citizens by checking and controlling those who, acting outside the law, are trying to sow chaos and anarchy in our homeland.

Nicaragua

New Government Proposal for Contra Settlement

PA2702042489 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 0309 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Report by Alister Doyle]

[Text] San Pedro Sula, Honduras, 26 Feb (REUTER)—Nicaragua has submitted a new proposal for the departure of the anti-Sandinist rebels from Honduran territory, to include the delivery of lands to those who return to their country and passports for those who wish to establish themselves in other countries as refugees, Nicaraguan sources stated today.

The new proposal, presented today to Honduran officials, replaces the one announced in Venezuela early this month; it reduces from 4 months to 3 the term established for the demobilization of the contra army and adds other details concerning the rebels' departure from Honduras.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto plans to meet tomorrow and the day after with his Honduran counterpart, Carlos Lopez, in this industrial city of northern Honduras, within the framework of a conference in which other foreign ministers of Central America and the European community will meet.

The Sandinists are also using foreign mediators to assess the contras' opinions about the plan proposed for the demobilization of their army, the sources stated.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega last week dismissed the possibility of holding talks with the rebels, noting that the force was a cadaver waiting to be buried.

During a summit conference held earlier this month in El Salvador, the Central American presidents agreed to draft a mutually acceptable plan for the contras' departure in exchange for the adoption of democratic reforms in Nicaragua and the holding of free elections in that country on 25 February 1990.

But the presidents did not establish a term for the implementation of the plan after it was drafted.

"The Nicaraguan proposal for a 3-month term is flexible," a Nicaraguan source said. He added that they had attempted to reduce the 4 months partly to guarantee rebel candidates' totally joining the election process that begins on 25 August.

The rebels have said they will lay down their weapons and return to their homeland only after they are certain the Nicaraguan Government is fulfilling its commitments. Many contras argue that the Sandinists are inflexible communists who will never accept democracy.

The Nicaraguan authorities hope their initiative will be carried out by an international commission headed by the UN and OAS secretaries general, with the support of the Red Cross and the office of the UNHCR.

The Sandinist sources showed REUTER copies of the last two proposals.

The last proposal specifies that the contras must turn over their weapons to the international commission wherever they are. It does not establish what attitude will be adopted if the rebels offer resistance. The contras claim there are some 13,000 fighters accompanied by 15,000 families in the eastern region of Honduras.

The previous plan suggested the Honduran Army disarm the contras, but President Jose Azcona discarded the plan because he felt that operation could endanger Honduran lives.

"Land, work tools, and raw materials will be given to those who want to engage in farm production, in accordance with the abilities of the Nicaraguan Government," the Nicaraguan proposals state. The funds required for the repatriation will be requested from the United Nations, the OAS, the Red Cross, and the office of the UNHCR.

The main body of the contras has been in Honduras since the U.S. Congress suspended new military aid 1 year ago. The last humanitarian assistance package, which totals $27.1 million, expires 31 March.

New elements of the second proposal include the offer of granting Nicaraguan passports to those who want to return to their homeland. Honduras has said all the refugees must leave the country and trusts the U.S. Government will cooperate in resettling them.

The rebels who decide to return to Nicaragua will have to cross the border points of Las Manos, Teotecacinte, Leymus, and El Espino, from where they will be transported to their destination by the Red Cross, the new Sandinist proposal reads.

Borge: Ortega To Respect Election Decisions

PA2502224589 Paris AFP in Spanish 2134 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 25 Feb (AFP)—Interior Minister Commander Tomas Borge said today that if the FSLN loses the 25 February 1990 elections, President Daniel Ortega "would leave power immediately." After delivering a speech to representatives of more than 5,000 disabled war veterans, the Sandinist leader told newsmen that "the people back the FSLN."

Costa Rican President Oscar Arias recently said that his Nicaraguan counterpart committed himself to resigning if his party lost the elections, something that the Sandinists believe is almost "impossible."

According to the Nicaraguan Constitution, presidential terms are for 6 years, so the current term would expire on 10 January 1991. The current government, however, could resign if the Sandinists lose the elections. If this happens, the National Assembly would appoint a president and a vice president for the remainder of the 6-year term.

Regarding the FSLN's candidates for the upcoming elections, Borge reiterated that the party has not yet decided on a nomination ticket. However, observers predict that the FSLN—the party in power in Nicaragua—will once again nominate their current leaders, Daniel Ortega and Sergio Ramirez.

Furthermore, Borge—the sole survivor of the FSLN's founders—said that the presence of foreign observers at the upcoming elections "will cast away any petty doubts about our elections."

Borge added that he was even in favor of having observers arrive before election day "so they can vouch for the entire election process."

Ortega: 'Bilateral Talks' Required for Election

PA2502223389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2034 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Masaya, Nicaragua, 25 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said today that any members of the opposition who refuse to participate in the bilateral talks called for by the government "will be left out" of the election process scheduled for February 1990.

Ortega began individual talks with opposition leaders on Wednesday with the objective of reaching a political consensus regarding Nicaragua's upcoming elections.

Without naming the people involved, the president described as "irresponsible" those opposition leaders who have refused to participate in the talks on matters such as the reform of the electoral and press laws and the controversial amnesty for 1,700 former Somozist guards.

In a public ceremony to commemorate the 11th anniversary of the uprising by the people of Masaya, a city 30 km east of Managua, Ortega said that with that attitude, the opposition is showing that it is not interested in solving the economic crisis afflicting the people.

Thus far, the Socialist Party, two Conservative Party factions, the Independent Liberal Party, and the Communist Party have refused to attend the meetings because they feel that this dialogue will not lead to an understanding and, to the contrary, will produce "confusion and anarchy."

These parties are calling for a resumption of the national dialogue that was suspended in April 1988 after the government refused to amend the January 1987 Constitution as demanded by the opposition.

The head of state explained that the government decided to call in the opposition parties separately for a fruitful exchange of ideas because when they were all seen together, "we were unable to reach an agreement."

"We would be wasting our time, and that would be like starting over," Ortega said. He added: "Some parties have still not been invited to the bilateral talks."

The Nicaraguan president said: "We will continue to talk to arrive at points of agreement" that will allow the country's election process "to proceed."

"The election process cannot be subordinated to the interests of a few capitalists, bourgeois, and pro-imperialists," the Sandinist leader said in reference to the political parties that have refused to participate in the bilateral talks.

At the Central American summit held in El Salvador on 13-14 February, Ortega promised to the other Central American presidents to move the general elections forward from November to February 1990, to amend the electoral and media laws, and to free 1,700 former Somozist guards.

Ortega used the conclusion of his speech to expound on the government's decision to free the former Somozist guards, saying that "peace and the lives of Nicaraguans are worth more than that of the former guards."

"It is hard for us to take this step," he said, referring to the release of the "murderers who massacred and bombed" the people. He added, however, that they must do "everything for peace."

More Opposition Parties Meet With Government

PA2402145889 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1220 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] The second round of talks between the opposition political parties and the Sandinist government has taken place with the participation of leaders from the Revolutionary Workers Party, PRT, the Marxist-Leninist Peoples Action Movement, MAP, and the Popular Social Christian Party, PPSC.

PRT leader Bonifacio Miranda said his party rejects the national dialogue because it entails negotiations with rightist parties and is a trap that U.S. imperialism has laid for the revolutionary process.

He said the electoral amendments proposed by rightist opposition leaders must be discussed at the National Assembly, where the dialogue with the government should take place.

MAP leader Isidro Tellez told this newscast that his party does not agree with the idea of moving up the date of the elections, but that this is subject to the agreements signed in El Salvador.

MAP members proposed that the rightist parties sign an agreement with the contras to establish a cease-fire.

The national dialogue will continue today with the participation of the Liberal Party, PALI, and the Central American Unionist Party, PUCA.

At the end of the second round of talks with the government, the PPSC proposed that the national dialogue be sponsored by the National Reconciliation Commission.

Regarding moving up the date of elections, PPSC leader Mauricio Diaz said conditions for elections are more important than dates. Consequently, amendments to the electoral, political parties, and media laws must be discussed.

According to Diaz, voter identification cards have to be issued before elections are held. He said certain European political parties are interested in helping with this process.

The PRT, MAP, and PPSC leaders explained their views at the national dialogue.

Speaking on behalf of the PRT, Miranda rejected the national dialogue and the pardon for former national guardsmen:

[Begin Miranda recording] We reject the national dialogue because it is the result of the counterrevolutionary agreement—Esquipulas II—which the rightist bloc, made up of the 14 political parties, intends to convert into negotiations to reach pacts and deals behind the people's back.

2. [number as heard] Any amendment to the various laws under discussion must be decided at the National Assembly, which was chosen by the people in the 1984 elections.

We reject that amendments to the laws we are discussing can be approved by a national dialogue, ignoring the institutions chosen by the people.

We claim the right of political parties to appear at the National Assembly to explain their views on the topics under discussion.

3. We reject a pardon for former Somozist guardsmen and the counterrevolutionaries because we feel this is a potential threat to the Nicaraguan revolution.

4. We reject international supervision by the OAS and the United Nations of the Nicaraguan elections because we feel it is a violation of our country's sovereignty and an intervention in our domestic affairs that threatens the nation's political independence, the main achievement of the 1979 revolutionary victory. [end recording]

MAP leader Isidro Tellez said that his party does not agree with moving up the election date and that this is only an agreement by the five Central American presidents.

[Begin Tellez recording] Regarding the constitutional amendments demanded by the right-wing parties, we proposed to the government that a referendum be held so the people can say whether they want these amendments.

If the people say they do not want these amendments, then the political parties should accept the people's mandate. If the people say they want them, then a constitutent assembly would have to be established to draft a new Constitution.

Why are we proposing this? Because we are the only party that did not sign the Constitution, because we do not agree with it.

If the right-wing parties are proposing a more right-wing Constitution, then we propose—and demand—that the people be given the option to say if they want a new Constitution. [end recording]

PPSC leader Diaz said that to hold elections in 1990, the appropriate conditions must be created. He suggested that the dialogue be organized by the National Reconciliation Commission.

[Begin recording] [Diaz] We believe that the national dialogue must resume under the auspices of the National Reconciliation Commission. We proposed that the National Reconciliation Commission summon the two parties that suspended the dialogue and resume it.

[Reporter] What did the president say?

[Diaz] He said that he will abide by the letter of the agreement signed in San Salvador and that this not up to the National Reconciliation Commission. [end recording]

Dr Rafael Solis, the government's representative at the national dialogue, yesterday said that progress was made in the second round of talks with the opposition. He said that the opposition representatives brought serious, written proposals to President Ortega.

[Begin Solis recording] I would say that it was a very constructive round with some interesting ideas. Perhaps the party representatives already mentioned them to journalists. The PRT, MAP, and PPSC—the three parties that attended today's talks—made interesting proposals about the implementation of the Salvadoran agreements.

We feel that the best way to make progress is through these talks. The president said this clearly.

After this round, there will be another round of talks in which the government will have to give a response to the proposals that the opposition is making, otherwise this matter would be left up in the air.

I feel that progress is being made. Many representatives brought specific proposals in writing. Others promised to bring more specific proposals to the next round of talks.

The important thing is that progress has been made and that the parties are interested in [words indistinct]. [end recording]

More on Party Meetings

PA2502044689 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0304 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 24 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaragua's smallest party today proposed to President Daniel Ortega that a national coalition government, composed of Sandinist and opposition members, be installed prior to the forthcoming elections.

The proposal was made by leaders of the Central American Unionist Party (PUCA), who participated on Friday in the bilateral meetings Ortega has been holding with opposition leaders since Wednesday to prepare for the February 1990 elections.

The PUCA leadership is opposed to the government's intention to move the elections forward from November to February of next year. They are in favor, however, of holding elections for municipal leaders and leaders of autonomous regions and for Central American Parliament delegates.

Furthermore, the PUCA leadership told Ortega that it wanted the FSLN, which is currently in power, to "abandon its hegemonic positions that it has had to date" and to begin issuing identification cards to Nicaraguans as soon as possible.

Leaders of Nicaragua's Democratic Conservative Party (PCDN), who are represented in the legislative assembly and whose leader is Hernaldo Zuniga, also attended the meeting with President Ortega.

The PCDN leaders told Ortega that it is "essential" to reform the Constitution and to create constitutional and common laws prior to the elections.

The PCDN leaders said they would be willing to participate in bilateral talks leading toward a "national dialogue" between the government and opposition party representatives.

Zuniga told ACAN-EFE that "as Conservative Party members, we are willing to participate in an election process provided that there are guarantees and conditions that satisfy the opposition."

He added that his party would prefer the elections to be held in November 1990 and for there to be a referendum so the people can decide whether or not to reform the current Constitution.

Liberal Party (PALI) leaders had also been invited to participate in these meetings with President Ortega at the Cesar Augusto Silva Convention Center. However, they did not attend.

These direct talks between the government and opposition parties will continue on Monday and Tuesday of next week.

Later, perhaps during the first week in March, there will be a new round of bilateral talks in which Ortega, according to FSLN spokesman Rafael Solis, will address the opposition's demands.

Solis said that before 25 April, the government and the opposition should reach an agreement regarding electoral code reforms and the media.

Opposition Leaders To Meet With Arias, Perez

PA2502171589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1619 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 25 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan opposition leaders will meet this week with the Costa Rican and Venezuelan presidents, apparently to promote candidates for the upcoming elections, political sources announced today.

Some 20 party leaders, businessmen, and representatives of dissident labor organizations plan to meet with Costa Rican President Oscar Arias on Monday and with Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez on Thursday.

Their mission is to express the Nicaraguan opposition parties' interest in launching Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and Enrique Bolanos as presidential candidates for the coming elections, the sources told ACAN-EFE.

The group, which will travel today to Costa Rica, represents the "group of 14" opposition parties, the Nicaraguan Democratic Coordinating Board (CDN), the four non-Sandinist labor organizations, and the Nicaraguan Higher Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP).

Violeta is the widow of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro Cardenal, the anti-Somozist newsman killed in Managua on 10 January 1978. She is also the publisher of the opposition newspaper LA PRENSA.

Asked during a public antigovernment demonstration on 15 January if she would agree to be the opposition presidential candidate, she replied: We shall see.

Former COSEP President Bolanos told a private radio station in Managua today "that (whether or not I agree to be a candidate) will have to be seen."

"To agree to something like that," Bolanos said, "implies that there will have to be agreement on a number of commitments."

The opposition leader said the decision on the opposition candidates is something that should be decided by Nicaraguans and not by President Perez.

The opposition leaders' visit to Costa Rica and Venezuela will take place while talks between President Daniel Ortega and dissident parties, which began on Wednesday, are still under way.

It is believed that these talks, which are aimed at seeking a proper climate for the upcoming elections, will end on Tuesday.

Furthermore, a new round of talks is scheduled for the beginning of March, when it is expected that President Ortega will respond to the opposition's demands.

Obando y Bravo Rejects Possible Nomination
PA2602235789 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2219 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo said today that if he receives a proposal to become a presidential candidate he would reject it because, above all, he "is a bishop," and his mission "is to preach the Gospel."

During his Sunday homily today, the prelate said: "The bishops must enlighten events through Gospel preachings and Christianize the political arena."

Some Nicaraguan political sectors have been mentioning the name of Cardinal Obando y Bravo as a probable presidential candidate for the February 1990 presidential elections, because he is a symbol of opposition unity and national reconciliation.

Obando y Bravo said it is the responsibility of the lay persons (politicians) to solve the country's present serious crisis "so people abandon hunger."

Referring to Nicaraguan politicians, the Catholic leader said "I hope they will not act for their own selfish interests but for the welfare of the people, who are suffering, and that the politicians do not remain with their arms folded."

Cardinal Obando y Bravo added: "I hope all our problems are solved, Nicaraguan society reconciles, and Nicaraguans stop inspiring pity from people wherever they go."

Obando y Bravo made those statements after referring to the situation of thousands of Nicaraguans who live illegally in several U.S. cities, without jobs and under the threat of being deported.

When the Catholic leader was told Violeta Chamorro and Enrique Bolanos have been mentioned as probable opposition presidential candidates, he said:

"I repeat, it is up to the lay sectors to choose the persons who will seek the common good of our suffering people."

The religious leader referred to recent statements by President Daniel Ortega, who told an opposition politician he preferred that Nicaragua's Radio Catolica only broadcast religious news.

"Now that the (Central American) presidents have pledged to respect total freedom of expression, this should also cover Radio Catolica," the Nicaraguan cardinal said in a brief meeting with reporters after officiating Sunday mass.

The "Church" newscasts of the Nicaraguan Catholic radio station were closed by the government last year. Church authorities have requested that the Interior Ministry reopen the newscast, but the government has still kept the information medium closed.

Concerning the future of the National Reconciliation Commission (CRN) chaired by Obando y Bravo, he said that "it remains paralyzed," as is the Verification Commission of the Sapoa agreements (southern Nicaragua), signed in March 1988 between the Sandinists and the Nicaraguan Resistance (leadership of the "contras").

"I understand that at the summit held 13-14 February in El Salvador, the presidents committed themselves toward reviving the reconciliation commissions so they can continue to exist and do their work," the bishop stated.

Obando y Bravo said that in Nicaragua's case, the Sandinist government had said the commission "would be paralyzed" until after the summit in El Salvador, and that it is up to the Sandinist authorities to revive it.

RN Seeking Support for 'Negotiated Solution'
PA2502024789 Paris AFP in Spanish 0139 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Washington, 24 Feb (AFP)—The Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] announced today that it is conducting an active political-diplomatic campaign in Europe and Latin America to seek international support for an urgent "negotiated solution" to Nicaragua's political crisis.

Bosco Matamoros, official spokesman of the rebel group created in 1981 under the sponsorship of the Reagan administration, explained to AFP that this international support is necessary because "conditions do not yet exist" for the electoral process heralded by Managua "as part of the country's democratization process."

Matamoros said that in addition to negotiations conducted within Central America, the rebel leadership is making strong efforts to schedule separate meetings with the presidents of Venezuela, Uruguay, and Colombia. He said that in Europe, efforts will particularly be focused on Spain, France, Italy, Britain, and Portugal.

After stating that President Daniel Ortega's Sandinist government "is constantly making promises that afterwards it does not keep," Matamoros emphasized that "a political dialogue among all involved parties is increasingly necessary."

He added that as a guarantee for peace, the RN demands holding a "tripartite national dialogue" with the participation of Sandinists, rebels, and members of the national political opposition.

"However, as a first step to improve political conditions, it is essential that the necessary constitutional reforms be made," the rebel leader said. This rebel position echoes that of the national political opposition.

As a third step [no second step as received] toward implementing democratization in Nicaragua, the RN demands "total amnesty" for prisoners and "total freedom of expression—and not a selective one as the Sandinists want."

"The government must release more than 8,000 political prisoners whose names appear on the lists and documents presented by the RN to the verification commission for the peace agreements. Amnesty should not be limited to former Somozist guards," Matamoros said.

"We have begun political-diplomatic efforts in Europe and Latin America to seek international support for an urgent solution to our country's political problems," he said.

As part of these efforts, RN directorate members will tour Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Costa Rica and they will then revitalize contacts with Latin American and European authorities.

"I have already been in Europe and new contacts with those countries form part of our new strategy," Matamoros added.

Asked about the possible presidential candidacy of Alfredo Cesar—one of the rebel directorate members—the spokesman said that "it is still too early to speak about candidacies and to formulate positions on the elections, because that would create confusion."

Matamoros insisted that "political dialogue to find a negotiated solution to the Nicaraguan conflict is important to us. Unilateral handling of the situation constitutes a blending of Sandinism and Somozism."

'Revenge' Against Released Guardsmen Feared

PA2702000989 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 2144 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 26 Feb (REUTER)—Interior Minister Tomas Borge has stated that the Nicaraguan Government fears that if imprisoned former national guardsmen of the former dictator Anastasio Somoza are released soon, revenge will be taken by those who harbor rancor against them.

President Daniel Ortega has said that this coming week he will ask the Nicaraguan National Assembly to approve amnesty for 1,700 guardsmen imprisoned by the Sandinists when Somoza was overthrown by the revolution in 1979.

The decision to release the guardsmen—as part of the Central American peace plan—has irritated many Nicaraguans, who accuse the national guardsmen of having killed and tortured thousands who opposed Somoza.

Asked if there was any danger that death squads might be formed to take revenge against the guardsmen, Minister Borge stated yesterday that the government will never organize death squads.

"If we organized death squads to take revenge against those guardsmen who will be released, we would be criminals," he stated at a news conference.

Nonetheless, he did not dismiss the possibility there may be personal vendettas against the guardsmen.

"It is possible a son may avenge his father's death or a father may avenge his son's death, taking the wrong path and doing justice on his own," he stated.

Borge, a founding member of the FSLN, said such actions would be wrong and would reflect a lack of confidence in the Nicaraguan revolution.

He explained that Nicaragua—which has been at war for 8 years against the rebels supported by the United States—obtained peace in exchange for the release of the guardsmen. "We have prevented bloodshed," Borge said.

Human rights defense organizations have claimed many guardsmen were sentenced on the basis of feeble proof and unfair trials.

After Ortega announced on 21 February that he will request the release of the guardsmen, newspapers unleashed a debate questioning the timeliness of the decision.

Velia Peralta, whose son was killed by Somozist guardsmen, said the guardsmen's release was a bitter pill to swallow.

"I cannot forgive the assassins of the fruit of my womb and of so many thousands of patriots who only wanted to liberate their people," she told the newspaper BARRICADA this week.

The pardons are part of a peace agreement signed last week by the five Central American presidents, an agreement that also demands that the army of the contras be dissolved and democratic reforms be carried out in Nicaragua.

Asked about the possibility of the opposition parties' boycotting the upcoming February elections, Borge responded: "We do not have the slightest doubt there will be political parties going to the elections; perhaps all will go...perhaps some, which would suffice."

Chamorro Views Quayle's Comments on Summit
PA2702013389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0019 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Text] San Pedro Sula, Honduras, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan Vice Foreign Minister Javier Chamorro Mora said today Nicaragua does not know whether the criticism expressed by U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle against the agreements reached at the most recent Central American summit are Washington's "official policy or not."

Chamorro refused to directly reply to Quayle's statements, according to which the agreements reached at the summit will only serve for the Managua government's "continued oppression of the Nicaraguan people."

Chamorro added: "We believe the Bush administration must not let this opportunity to find peace in Central America pass by."

At the summit held 13-14 February in El Salvador, the Central American presidents agreed to prepare a plan for the dismantling of the contra movement in exchange for the implementation of democratic reforms in Nicaragua.

Thus far, the Sandinists have asserted the U.S. Administration's silence after the summit is "a good sign" and confirms the difference between the course taken by President Bush and that taken by his predecessor, Ronald Reagan.

In contrast with Quayle's statements, the EEC foreign ministers present in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where they will attend a meeting with their Central American counterparts, have expressed support for the results of the most recent Central American summit.

Chamorro only said: "There has always been a contrast between European and U.S. policies toward Central America."

Defense Ministry Claims Honduras Attacked Post
PA2402222989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2119 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Managua, 24 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The Nicaraguan Defense Ministry today charged that Honduran Army troops attacked a Sandinist military outpost in northern Nicaragua for the third time in only 4 days. The attack did not result in any casualties.

A Defense Ministry communique reported that on Thursday Honduran soldiers used rifle fire, grenade launchers, and machineguns to "harass" a Sandinist military observation post in "Murupuchi" on the Honduran border.

The official source did not provide further details on the attacks originating from Honduran territory.

The Defense Ministry further revealed that also on Thursday, Honduran Army troops used rifle and mortar fire to "harass" two Sandinist observation posts on the border with Honduras, adding that there were no casualties resulting from these attacks.

Panama

Noriega Reportedly Ordered Journalist's Murder
PA2402221289 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2109 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Caracas, 24 Feb (EFE)—A former member of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] today in Caracas claimed that [FDP chief] General Manuel Antonio Noriega ordered him to murder opposition journalist Mayin Correa.

Marco Antonio Morales made these accusations during an international conference entitled "Panama: Democracy or Continuum," which ended today.

Morales said that he had been incarcerated in Panamanian jails for 10 months—by order of Gen Noriega—and had been unable to go into exile until now.

Morales said: "I received orders from Gen Noriega himself to murder Mayin Correa." He added that Correa's life was saved by a crowd that prevented the murder from taking place.

Although Morales did not provide details as to the date of the alleged murder attempt, he emphasized that he had been in charge of carrying out the order and was imprisoned because he was unable to accomplish the task.

Morales added that he had not been able to make this accusation earlier because he had been warned that reprisals would be taken against his family if he criticized the Panamanian regime or Noriega in any way.

He said: "They [not further identified] threatened to murder my family in Panama if I accused Gen Noriega."

Mayin Correa served as international affairs director for the National Journalists Association in Panama. She was also in charge of the radio program "The Word" ["La Palabra"] aired by the Panamanian radio station Radio Continente. She is currently working as a correspondent for Radio Impacto in Costa Rica and writes a column in Miami's EL NUEVO HERALD.

Furthermore, Morales warned that if the anti-Noriega opposition does not gain power through the 7 May elections, those opposed to the regime "will take up arms."

He said that all opposition groups are determined to begin an armed struggle against Noriega if he tries to stay in power through an election fraud.

FDP Communique Denies Claims

PA2402235289 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2304 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Panama City, 24 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The Panama Defense Forces today stated that Marco Antonio Morales, a former Panamanian soldier who today accused General Manuel Antonio Noriega of ordering him to kill an opposition journalist, is "a private who was discharged because he suffered mental disorders."

In a press communique, the FDP said that "the only record of a Marco Antonio Morales in (the computer department's) payroll files is a private who was discharged because of mental disorders."

A report issued today in Caracas stated that Marco Antonio Morales had accused General Noriega, FDP commander in chief, of having ordered him to murder opposition journalist Mayin Correa.

The FDP communique added that Morales had also been dismissed for "misappropriation while serving as a guard for common criminals."

According to the Caracas report, Morales made these accusaitons at an international conference for politicians and journalists entitled "Panama, Democracy, or Continuum."

Morales said he was imprisoned for 6 months for not carrying out Noriega's order and added that he had not made this accusation before because he feared reprisals against his family.

Foreign Media Accreditation Rules Published

PA2402163089 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 24 Feb 89 pp 1, 12

[Resolution 474 issued by the Journalists Accreditation Board on 23 February 1989]

[Text] The Journalists Accreditation Board [Junta Tecnica de Periodismo], duly empowered to carry out this action, informs the public that effective with the publication of this resolution:

1. Any journalist who wishes to be accredited as a foreign correspondent in our country will have to present documents that prove the existence of the media they represent. This will be duly authenticated by the Panamanian consul in the country where the media and the journalist seeking accreditation are based.

2. Correspondents entering the country on special assignments must meet these same requirements.

3. Any qualified Panamanian journalist who represents a foreign news organization must register his status as correspondent and the organization he represents at the Journalists Accreditation Board.

4. Journalists who are accredited as foreign correspondents will have to carry an identification card, which will be issued by the Journalists Accreditation Board for $20.

5. Journalists who travel to Panama as special reporters will have to seek accreditation at the Journalists Accreditation Board, an agency of the National Media Directorate, where they will receive their accreditation for a $50 fee.

This resolution rescinds previous resolutions and goes into effect as soon as it is published in the local media.

Issued in Panama City on 23 February 1989.

Luis Danilo Caballero, president

Luis Romero Villalobos, executive secretary

Ramon F. Castellanos, Journalists Union of Panama

Luis T. Harris, Association of Journalists of Colon Province

Galo Arosemena, Association of Journalists of Chiriqui Province

Manuel Tejada Lopez, Union of Press, Radio, and Television Journalists of the Central Provinces

'U.S. Embassy Officials' Reportedly at Protest

PA2602010889 Paris AFP in Spanish 2316 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Panama City, 25 Feb (AFP)—Approximately 300 people, including U.S. Embassy officials, today commemorated with a protest the 1st anniversary of the closing of seven opposition media accused of acting against the security of the state and the Panamanian economy.

Reporters and opposition members called to the demonstration by the National Journalists Association (CNP) gathered in front of the offices of LA PRENSA, the Panama City newspaper that was shut down, and shouted antigovernment slogans demanding "more freedom for Panamanians."

[U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer] Terrence Kneebone, a U.S. diplomat who has been accused by the Panamanian Foreign Ministry of meddling in Panamanian affairs, was present at the protest accompanied by other USIS officials, AFP has been able to confirm.

Around the middle of last year, the Panamanian Foreign Ministry gave Kneebone a 48-hour deadline to leave the country, but the diplomat has ignored it because the United States recognizes the government of Eric Arturo Delvalle and not that of Manuel Solis Palma.

LA PRENSA is the largest Panamanian opposition newspaper. It was closed 1 year ago after the Legislative Assembly removed Delvalle from office following his attempted dismissal of Panama Defense Forces Commander General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Other opposition media were closed along with LA PRENSA, including the dailies EXTRA and EL SIGLO, the weekly QUIUBO, and Radio Continente and Radio Sonora. The frequencies of Panama City Panavision Television, owned by Delvalle, were auctioned off, allegedly because of the television station's debts to government agencies.

LA PRENSA Information Director Wilfredo Jimenez told AFP that an important government official, presumably President Manuel Solis Palma, privately informed a delegation of journalists that there is "little hope" that the media will be reopened. Jimenez said that the official promised that he "will take steps" to authorize the publication of the daily HOY, which is owned by LA PRENSA employees and which has been waiting for the past 4 months for authorization to begin publication.

Jimenez estimated that media enterprises have lost over $3 million as a result of their year-long closure. He said that 2,000 people have been hurt because of this.

CNP Vice President Migdalia Fuentes said that in Panama, journalism "has been banned" and that "there can be no fair and honest elections if the media remain closed."

Fuentes asked the dailies EL TIEMPO (Colombia), EXCELSIOR (Mexico), LISTIN DIARIO (Dominican Republic), LA NACION (Costa Rica), LA PRENSA (Nicaragua), EL COMERCIO (Peru), EL NACIONAL (Venezuela), LA PRENSA (Argentina), and EL NUEVO DIARIO (Puerto Rico) to pressure the Panamanian Government into reopening the media.

Gen Woerner Addresses Chamber of Commerce

Reportedly Critical of U.S.

PA2102205289 Panama City MEDIODIA in Spanish 20 Feb 89 p 2

[Unattributed report; top and bottom lines of report's columns missing because of printing error]

[Text] In a recent conference held at the American Chamber of Commerce, General Fred Woerner, commander in chief of the Southern Command, said the U.S. Government is currently not implementing an intelligent policy in Panama.

The commander of the [passage missing] stationed on the banks of the Panama Canal explained this situation is basically a result of the "lack of appointment of a new under secretary of state for inter-American affairs."

Woerner also said it was "a little critical of the [passage missing] the previous policies in Panama," but he added that "he feels hopeful and encouraged, because there will be a substantial change of procedures."

In another part of his speech, the U.S. general admitted the Panama Defense Forces "are very capable military forces at a tactical level"; however, he added, "they do not have enough troops, economic and technological support, and the wealth [passage missing] defensive of the Panama Canal of an attack with sophisticated weapons.

Fred Woerner also said the Defense Department is "currently investing large sums of money in studies for the relocation of the Southern Command."

Woerner announced the contracts for two studies have already been signed for such purposes, adding: "The decision on where the Southern Command and the support troops will be relocated will be made public sometime this year.

'Diplomats' on Woerner Comments

PA1902162189 Panama City LA REPUBLICA DOMINICAL in Spanish 19 Feb 89 pp 1-A, 8-A

[Unattributed report: "Woerner: A Defeated Military Man Seeking a Post"]

[Text] General Fred Woerner, the virgin rifle [fusil vergen] chief of the U.S. Southern Command stationed in Panama, seems doomed by fate to never amount to anything else. This is the conclusion reached by Western diplomats accredited in Panama City after listening to the remarks made by the U.S. military man to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce at the Marriott Hotel.

Woerner's remarks sought to show that the United States is afraid of Latin American mass protests, especially when he said that in view of the imminent departure from Panama at noon on 31 December 1999, no other country in this continent has offered to house the Southern Command installations, the diplomatic sources pointed out.

Woerner categorically said: "We do not dare ask to set up the Southern Command in another Latin American country because we would be creating a problem for that government," he said.

One ambassador who requested he not be identified said that regardless of whether that is true or not, it is unbelievable that Woerner would be so childish and thus show he just cannot wear the shoes worn at one time by Generals Gorman and Galvin, who preceded him as Southern Command chief.

It would seem Woerner's speciality is not military strategy or tactics on how to confront contingencies, but delivering dull lectures to Chamber of Commerce members, said the disgusted South American diplomat, who approves [as published] of U.S. foreign policy.

A Panama-based U.S. businessman who does important business with Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and other countries of the area was asked about Gen Woerner's remarks concerning the Salvadoran situation. He pointed out that he (Woerner) is very poorly informed of what is happening in El Salvador.

The Southern Command chief said Alfredo Cristiani, Salvadoran rightist candidate, is a "respectable and capable" man, but he admitted he did not really know if he was the one giving the orders.

The diplomat recalled that the death squads are only managed by the rightists, and that seems to confuse Gen Woerner, who does not really know that the top leader of the Nationalist Republican Alliance—Major Roberto D'Aubuisson—is the man who actually rules that Salvadoran rightist political party.

One can reach the conclusion that Fred Woerner is a disposable item, like so many products of modern technlogoy, because he does not have the ability or skills to get ahead, as was the case with John Galvin, who was promoted from Southern Command chief in Panama to NATO headquarters, the consulted diplomat concluded.

'Simplistic Opinions' Assailed

PA2502001589 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 20 Feb 89 p 4

["Let the People Judge" column by Ricardo Lince: "General of What?"]

[Text] The United States is making itself infamous in Panama by sending us governors of what? Ambassadors of what? And generals of what?—as clear examples of its administrative, diplomatic, and military failures in Panama.

The 9 January events occurred when a governor of what? lost control of events and was incapable of implementing his president's order to raise both [U.S. and Panamanian] flags in the former Canal Zone, as agreed between the two countries. The diplomat's political techniques turned into one of the most spectacular failures when his strategy, which ignored international law, did not succeed in ousting General Noriega and led the diplomat into one of the most dramatic fiascos ever involving a great power. Now General Fred Woerner, the U.S. Southern Command's boss, is trying to analyze the problems of geopolitics in general and expresses simplistic opinions, which is inappropriate given the great military responsibility conferred upon him.

The dangerous part is that in case of an armed conflict, he will use the same opinions in defending the canal, making him dangerous to national security because he will have lost the battle before war is declared.

A soldier may have many thoughts that he does not express because certain messages destroy combat morale. He makes these statements like an incompetent soldier, a product of the famous Peter Principle that seems to characterize the new U.S. soldier, who chooses soldiering as a profession to guarantee him personal security, status in his community, and an easy life.

Proof of this is published every day in the domestic and international press when it is reported that these soldiers shoot at each other, nervous and frightened by the shadows of palm trees, just as their generals are surprised by secret meetings in Panama, by their men being captured while conducting espionage activities close to Panamanian bases, and by other activities that demonstrate to them the professional defensive capability of the Panamanian soldier.

This is a sad example of the power of a war waged through television, an aggressiveness derived from drug consumption, and the capacity to lose sight of the objective, which is basically the incoherence and the insecurity expressed in the personality of the diplomat or soldier who shamelessly exhibits his ineptitude.

'Systematic Attack' Cited

PA2202130289 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 21 Feb 89 pp 19, 12

[Article by Luis Manuel Martinez: "General Woerner, a Four-Star Bureaucrat]

[Text] The resume, a promotional bulletin published when General Frederick Woerner replaced General John Galvin as chief of the Southern Command, stressed three essential aspects: He is a Latin American expert, married to a Bolivian, and speaks Spanish fluently.

With such personal and academic merits, Woerner did not escape the tradition of obedience, the soft-spoken protest, the implementation of measures that went against his experience and his convictions.

Once he voiced his difference with the State Department in its policy of aggression against Panama.

A few weeks later, he was engaged in a war of lies and exaggerations that he carried out through his psychological operations department. The years he spent in Panama before taking over as chief of the Southern Command did not do him much good.

The basic difference between Woerner and his predecessors, Generals Paul S. Gorman and John Galvin, is simple: The latter two military officers were prestigious and exercised authority in Congress. Their opinion was respected, and they were consulted before decisions were made or blunders were committed. That lack of leadership has made Woerner the "Virgin Rifle."

The gunfire incidents at Howard's fuel depots, the use of subordinates in espionage tasks, and the fallacious campaign about his troops being harassed do not constitute a meritorious record.

Together with Ambassador Arthur Davis and sinister, professional destabilizer John Maisto, Woerner has burned his military career. The other two never gained prestige during their missions in Paraguay and the Philippines, respectively. They were always saved by the timely move of an influential person.

Davis' influential protector has been none other than Jesse Helms, the racist and ultrareactionary Republican senator from North Carolina.

Perhaps Woerner's darkest action may have been transforming THE TROPIC TIMES paper into a cesspool that collects all the rotten filth that leaves the Washington disinformation offices.

When has a career general, in times of peace, fulfilling a purely administrative mission, descended to a systematic attack on a friendly country of the United States, such as Panama?

How has he let himself be dragged to the sad role of being a spokesperson of abuse and infamy against a small country, which his gigantic nation has wickedly exploited since 1914 and intervened in more than 70 times?

Studying Latin America and living among us before assuming his current command post have not been of much use to him.

His last "victory in combat" is impressive: a speech before the Chamber of Commerce at the Marriott Hotel.

He brilliantly confessed: "We dare not ask that the Southern Command be installed in another Latin American country, because this would create a problem for whatever government decided to do so."

I recall that his most recent visit to San Jose, Costa Rica was successful. He obtained the broad cooperation of President Oscar Arias to create conflicts at Paso Canoa, thus justifying another chapter of the novel "Chaos in Panama," which the United States has been writing to annul the Torrijos-Carter treaties shortly before the year 2000.

Never has a Southern Command chief engaged in such subordinate tasks, doing the work that corresponds to the espionage agencies, the tireless arm of Yankee interventionism.

If the Southern Command installations cannot be transferred to another country, there is not the slightest possibility they can continue in Panamanian territory a single minute after 31 December 1999.

Nobody is going to carry that dead body. They will have to do just as they did with the School of the Americas and relocate it to another part of their own territory.

He has gone from a military role to one of executor and spokesperson of a policy that has totally failed. He has displaced Davis, Maisto, and their group of provocateurs from the leading ridicule role.

In conclusion, he is a bureaucrat, incapable of explaining his views or the reality of Panama clearly and precisely.

He preferred to join the evil politicians of Washington and be reduced to the role of continuing the blunders of Elliott Abrams, whose post is so difficult that he still has not found a qualified replacement.

His four stars have lost their shine; his alternative of adopting a decorous attitude—as other generals did in their time—has vanished. The contrast between Woerner and Gorman and Galvin outlines the difference between military officers with a pragmatic concept and those who succumb to Washington.

'Deficient Leadership' Alleged

PA2202130989 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 21 Feb 89 p 4

["Let the People Judge" column by Ricardo Lince: "Don't Defend Me, Godfather"]

[Text] Panama has a joint defense pact with the United States for the protection of the Panama Canal. Therefore, the U.S. considers the country's security and everything concerning the canal's defense vital. This includes the requirement that the U.S. general who commands the U.S. troops demonstrate his professional competence and integrity. The criticism of General Fred Woerner, entrusted with that mission, should be interpreted in that sense.

This interest concerns not only Panama but all of Latin America because of the aggressive influence of U.S. militarism in the internal affairs of our countries. Therefore, the general's last intervention at the Marriott Hotel has classified him as a typical case of the so-called Peter Principle, which postulates that in any hierarchy, all members will advance until they reach their level of incompetence. This is notorious in the U.S. Army, whose officers have generated such a zeal to advance that advancement may have become the principal objective for the majority of its officers.

Other studies of the U.S. Army demonstrate that to advance, the candidate must act brutally and extremely selfishly, thinking only about his own interests. This type of politicking, demonstrated by Woerner at the Marriott Hotel, reduces the effectiveness of a military leader, exposing his accommodating integrity in a speech aimed at impressing the appropriate persons. The combined

effects of the policy and excessive bureaucratic influence have weakened the military ability of the U.S. Armed Forces. Woerner is an example.

This conduct of a high-ranking military man's enhancing his image causes a chain reaction that turns into a lack of respect toward him and a lack of confidence in his good judgement. This is so because a superficial viewpoint never leads to positive solutions; it is one of the manifestations of deficient leadership, with the loss of confidence among his own troops because of his inappropriate interventions in the effective performance of his mission. It is obvious that the U.S. Army has unprecedented internal problems that must worry its high command, because they reflect a loss in their professional superiority, influence, and moral respect.

Foreign Ministry Protest

PA2502154689 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 25 Feb 89 pp 1, 14

[Foreign Ministry communique issued in Panama City on 24 February]

[Text] **The Foreign Ministry, through its highest spokesmen, deems it necessary to inform the national and international public of the flagrant and disrespectful statement made by Gen Fred F. Woerner on 17 February during a regional meeting of American Chambers of Commerce. This statement constitutes an unacceptable meddling in the domestic affairs of the Republic of Panama with the clear and open intention of tarnishing the Panamanian election process. We view this action not only as an intervention, but as an overt violation of the 1977 Panama Canal treaties.**

The Foreign Ministry feels that the statement made by the commander in chief of the U.S. Southern Command, taking advangtage of an international meeting that only certain journalists linked to the opposition were allowed to cover, shows that Gen Woerner's speech was nothing more than a pretext to meddle in our domestic affairs. In an insolent manner, Gen Woerner said in his speech:

"We must plan for what to do in any case: whether there are reasonably honest elections, widely dishonest elections, a postponement of the elections, or any other possibility." The Foreign Ministry interprets Gen Woerner's statement as meaning that, in his opinion, reasonably honest elections will result in the opposition's victory and widely dishonest elections will result in the government's victory.

The Foreign Ministry deduces that Gen Woerner's clear intention was to question the Panamanian election process by creating doubts in order to justify the U.S. interventionist big-stick policy and the economic aggression against the Panamanian Government and people, and to perpetuate the U.S. military presence in Panama after the year 2000.

It is quite obvious to us that the United States intends to wait for the results of the 7 May elections and for the appointment of the U.S. assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs before determining its policy toward Panama.

Furthermore, the Foreign Ministry feels Gen Woerner's reference to the presence of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama is a dangerous threat to the Panama Canal's neutrality.

We deem it necessary to warn through this communique that Gen Woerner's instructions to the Panamanian opposition—when he said that he does not feel that the threat to the canal is military but political—represent a direct intervention in Panamanian domestic affairs and violates the canal treaties and annex agreements concerning the principle of nonintervention.

Finally, the Foreign Ministry protests and rejects the statement made by the commander in chief of the U.S. Southern Command. At the same time, it warns of distorting the efforts of the Panamanian Government to hold clean elections that will fulfill the Panamanian people's expectations and meet Panama's commitment to complete its decolonization process.

Issued in Panama City on 24 February 1989

Editorial Criticizes Speech

PA2602203089 Panama City LA REPUBLICA DOMINICAL in Spanish 26 Feb 89 p 15-A

[Text] On 17 February 1989, General Fred F. Woerner was the guest speaker at the regional meeting of the American Chambers of Commerce and Industries of Latin America at the Marriott Hotel in Panama City.

Only certain journalists accepted by groups that support the Panamanian opposition were allowed to attend the meeting.

Judging from the way Gen Woerner answered several questions, we reached the following conclusions:

1) Gen Woerner's speech intervenes in Panama's internal affairs and consequently violates Article II of the Agreement in Implementation of Article IV of the Panama Canal Treaty, which establishes the principle of nonintervention.

2) Gen Woerner ruled out the government's victory in the upcoming elections and has already prepared a justification for not recognizing the government if the official party wins.

This is surmised from the following statement:

"We must plan what to do in case of reasonably honest elections, openly dishonest elections, the postponement of elections, or any other situation."

Judging from his statement, Gen Woerner considers that an election is reasonably honest only if the opposition wins, and an openly dishonest election is if the government wins.

Therefore, there is a possibility that if the government wins the United States will claim it was a fraud, and it will fail to recognize the new government, thus justifying to the U.S. people and the world its policy of interference and political aggression against Panama. The purpose is clear—to remain in Panama after the year 2000.

There is a veiled intention to discredit the elections to sow doubt and chaos concerning the results.

However, it is obvious that the United States is waiting for the results of the elections, and the appointment of the assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, to determine its policy toward Panama.

3) Gen Woerner recognizes what the Panamanian Government has always stated: The canal's security depends on its neutrality. When asked if the Panama Defense Forces were prepared to defend the canal in 2000, Gen Woerner admitted that Panama is prepared for guerrilla warfare and a conventional war, but not for modern warfare.

Nevertheless, he added that he is not sure the United States is able to protect the canal against modern warfare.

This statement admits that the canal cannot be totally defended, something that General Torrijos always said.

Thus, the U.S. Southern Command's presence in Panama is a risk—particularly after 2000—because it would be a threat to the canal's neutrality.

4) A strategy has been coordinated between the opposition and the U.S. Government for the U.S. Southern Command to remain in Panama after 2000.

Asked about the U.S. Southern Command's future in Panama, Woerner hesitantly answered and admitted that other Latin American countries refuse to serve as a base for the U.S. Southern Command.

This reply reveals a sly complicity: If the opposition wins the elections there is a possibility of reaching an agreement so the U.S. Southern Command can remain in Panama.

The meetings between prominent opposition members and U.S. Southern Command officials in Panama must not be forgotten.

5) Gen Woerner establishes guidelines for the Panamanian opposition by stating that he believes the threat to the canal is political, not military. He emphasizes the point by asking: Can Panama defend the canal against a Panamanian political attack?

He is thus outlining the Panamanian opposition's course of action to interfere with canal operations.

We must keep in mind that the Americans are looking for a pretext to claim that the canal's security is being threatened in order to justify a possible intervention.

U.S. Armed Forces Accused of 'Provocation'

PA2302175889 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2300 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] In a provocative action showing disrespect for our national dignity, members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in Panama at dawn today removed the Panamanian flags on the two sides of the Bridge of the Americas and replaced them with white flags bearing a letter R crossed by an arrow, which is a symbol characterizing U.S. Armed Forces psychological operations.

The material of the flags, which were made with white fabric and fastened with thread and green adhesive tape, is of the kind used by U.S. Armed Forces.

Thousands of Panamanians who crossed the bridge protested and voiced their displeasure and disagreement with this provocation and disrespect that blemished our flag and hurt national dignity.

As soon as this was known, the 5th Victoriano Lorenzo Military Police Company placed new Panamanian flags on both sides of the bridge.

With this intolerable attitude, members of the U.S. Armed Forces continue to step up provocations on Panamanian territory.

U.S. Planning 'Mass Dismissal' at Embassy

PA2502012789 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 24 Feb 89 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Mass Dismissal of Panamanians at the U.S. Embassy"]

[Text] CRITICA was informed yesterday that the U.S. Embassy in Panama is carefully planning a mass dismissal of Panamanians working at that mission because many of them no longer have the trust of its top bosses.

According to information provided by a reliable source, a group of approximately 20 people who work for the U.S. Information Service, the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Department of State, and other offices in the U.S. Embassy will be dismissed first.

It was said that the mass dismissal is one way the top embassy officials plan to get rid of Panamanians who are unhappy with their policy against Panama.

It was also said that the same measure will be applied in the consular, customs, and administrative sections.

Alleged Dismissals Detailed

PA2602194089 Panama City LA REPUBLICA DOMINICAL in Spanish 26 Feb 89 p 1

[Text] The U.S. Embassy in Panama is taking the necessary steps to dismiss more than 50 of its Panamanian employees because U.S. officials distrust them and because the employees disagree with the way these high-ranking embassy officials hinder relations with the American people [as published] and destroy our country's image.

According to our sources, Deputy Chief of Mission John Maisto and Ambassador Arthur Davis indicated that all Panamanians must be dismissed. In addition, the senior diplomatic officials specifically stated that secretaries who are Panamanian nationals must be replaced by the wives of U.S. diplomats.

According to the memorandum [not further identified], the initial wave of dismissals will be as follows:

Subsidies Office [Officina de Subsidios]	4 positions
Secretarial Pool	5 positions
Economic Section	2 positions
D.A.O.	2 positions
U.S.I.S.	3 positions
Customs	2 positions
D.E.A.	2 positions
Legal Department	1 position

The memorandum also points out that, to begin with, at least five Panamanian employees are to be dismissed from the U.S. Consulate, and that these measures are to go into effect as soon as the consulate sends the appropriate administrative data.

At a later date, there will be dismissals in all branches, except in the intelligence branch, which—according to Deputy Chief of Mission Maisto—has precedence.

'Traitors' Allegedly Planning Armed Action

PA1902181489 Panama City LA REPUBLICA DOMINICAL in Spanish 19 Feb 89 p 4-A

[Editorial: "From Treason to Murder"]

[Text] Reports have been circulating for several months about plans by the traitors of the fatherland who, upon realizing they failed to get the United States to invade our country, are training guerrillas in Costa Rica and Miami to impose a government in Panama subservient to the Washington.

Now, a weapons arsenal has been discovered in Costa Rica at the home of Costa Rican-Panamanian Jose Maria Echevers, who has confessed that the macabre plan was under way; he planned, together with unpatriotic Eric Delvalle, to sow death in our country and turn it into another version of El Salvador, with death squads and attacks on the people.

According to the Costa Rican authorities, a search is under way for 100 Nicaraguan mercenaries who are in Costa Rica and other areas, where more weapons are hidden for guerrilla operations in Panama.

With Echevers' statement, the Panamanian people have realized just how far "Tuturo" Delvalle's plans go. They compromise the gringo slate of the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance, which intends to reach power through blood and fire and which plans to stage bloody operations in Panama. This would be a pretext for the U.S. Army forces to enter Panama. "Canal security" would serve as their pretext to invade our country.

Ambitious "Tuturo" Delvalle and his cohorts in Miami and Washington have been unmasked. They have not considered elections, but think of seizing power by force, not realizing that the people here are determined to confront the enemies of the fatherland and ready to defend their sovereignty with their own lives.

These anti-Panamanians planning the killing in Panama with Echevers do not care about the fate of the men, women, and children who might die in this action and only care about seizing power to continue using it for their own ends and to continue getting richer in Panama.

But the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] and the Dignity Battalions are prepared to repel any attempt at subversion. Beneath the guise of the elections and the civic struggle to attain power, the traitors are covertly hatching the nefarious plan that will submerge our country in a bloodbath.

Just as the Panamanian people have been able to withstand the merciless U.S. aggression for 20 months, they will repulse these traitors. Some of them are hiding in Quarry Heights, and others move about freely in the United States, recruiting contras and unscrupulous individuals to come to Panama to kill Panamanians and create a situation unprecedented in any other electoral process.

Let them come, let them try to enter. We are prepared here to make them pay for their treason with their own blood.

Ritter on Relations With 'Socialist' Countries

PA2102161989 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Statement by Foreign Minister Jorge Ritter; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] We are expanding the framework of our international relations, not only by establishing relations with socialist bloc countries but with members of the nonaligned world. We are establishing ties with African and socialist bloc countries.

The Vietnamese ambassador recently presented his credentials. We have had diplomatic relations with Vietnam for a long time. It must be recalled that Vietnam was the first country in the world to sign the neutrality pact in 1979.

Consequently, there are many countries with which we are establishing relations. This does not imply we have to send an ambassador right away. We will use concurrent ambassadors in this first stage. However, it is a duty and an obligation as Panamanians to expand as much as possible the framework of our international relations. Panama cannot live isolated, or looking at a single pole or place in the world.

Government Hails Western Sahara-Morocco Talks
PA1902131489 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 16 Feb 89 p 11

[Communique issued by the Foreign Ministry in Panama City on 15 February]

[Text] The Panamanian Government views the talks in January in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh between the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic and the Kingdom of Morocco as an important step toward creating the conditions that could end the armed conflict and allow for a peaceful solution of the conflict in Western Sahara.

The most important aspect of the Western Saharan-Moroccan talks was the favorable climate in which they took place. Panama, therefore, takes this opportunity to welcome both nations' resolve and effort to reach an understanding based on harmony and good-neighborliness, in the hope of attaining stability in the Maghreb region .

Panama urges you to continue using direct dialogue as a means of overcoming distrust and of reaching a political agreement that will bring just and lasting peace to Western Sahara.

To conclude, Panama ratifies its support of the efforts the United Nations and the OAU are making within the framework of their resolutions 40/50 and 105, respectively, regarding the war in Western Sahara, and reiterates its unwavering solidarity with the Western Saharan Government and people's just and legitimate goals.

Electoral Tribunal Reportedly Lacking Funds
PA1702225589 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Statements by former Electoral Tribunal President Cesar Quintero; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] The elections are less than 3 months away. In fact, the elections are only 2 months and a few days away. We therefore cannot help but be concerned about the situation. First, the Electoral Tribunal does not have the resources necessary to hold the elections. As I have said before, the elections will cost over $20 million, and the Electoral Tribunal has not even received one-fourth of that amount. The tribunal has seen to it that the election register is updated and is diligently printing the voting ballots and other voting materials, but I do not know how it has managed to finance these procedures.

There are other issues equally or even more worrisome. The elections are less than 3 months away and there is still no freedom of the press. Several important newspapers, radio stations, and one television station are still closed. There are people in exile and in prison. A law is still in effect that curtails the freedom to hold meetings.

I have heard that the opposition has informed city hall that it will hold a demonstration on 2 March, 2 months before the elections. This would be the first public event, the first demonstration. According to the Constitution, the local administrative authority—in this case the mayor—only has to be informed of the demonstration. Demonstrations and open-air meetings are not subject to authorization. One only has to notify the authorities that they will be taking place. I do not know what city hall has decided to do, but it is likely that the demonstration will be allowed to take place. It will be the first public event, the first public demonstration, over the elections.

Low-Income Housing Planned Near U.S. Embassy
PA2302151689 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 21 Feb 89 pp 1, 18

[Report by Jorge Mombeliard]

[Text] Two low-income housing buildings—of the urban renewal type "but with a new design in keeping with the area"—will be constructed by the Housing Ministry (MIVI) across from the U.S. Embassy in Anayansi Park, on Balboa Avenue, Panama City.

According to a MIVI spokesman, the housing project will not affect Anayansi Park, "and if does, it will be minimal."

The source explained the construction project for the two buildings is part of the MIVI's housing infrastructure plans to utilize every available space in Panama City.

Surveying of the land is now in progress "to prepare the area."

The project will have the backing of the central government and nontraditional financing. It will benefit 60 Panamanian families.

Transfer of Transportation Duties Announced

PA1902135089 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 18 Feb 89 pp 1, 14

[Text of communique issued by Major Luis Cordoba, director of National Directorate of Land Traffic and Transportation (DNTT); date and place not given]

[Text] The DNTT hereby informs all persons involved in passenger and cargo transportation activities that based on Decree No 2 of 19 January 1989, all duties pertaining this area have been entrusted to this directorate. This communique is forwarded to the following authorities:

1. Finance Ministry
2. Labor and Social Welfare Ministry
3. Commerce and Industry Ministry
4. Public Works Ministry
5. Municipalities.
6. Chiefs of military zones

It will also be forwarded to any other office or official connected to this field.

The DNTT also informs these authorities its facilities are available to provide the support, cooperation, and technical assistance they may need to fulfill their duties related to passenger and cargo transportation.

Members of cooperatives, central unions, and transport federations are advised to come to DNTT's liaison office if they need assistance to bring their documents up to date.

Sincerely,

"All for the Fatherland"

DNTT Director Maj Luis Cordoba

Official Reports Recent Unemployment Statistics

PA1902041489 Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Summary] Amilcar Villarreal, director of the Statistics and Census Office of the Comptroller General's Office, has said that 125,200 persons in Panama are jobless, based on an annual survey conducted in August. He added that the 16-percent unemployment rate is the highest in the country's history. He also said the unemployment rate went up from 12 to 16 percent between 1987 and 1988; however, in the metropolitan areas, the unemployment rate rose from 14 to 21 percent.

Revenue Director on Jan Tax Collection

PA1702225789 Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 Feb 89

[Text] Ricardo Levy, director of the Panamanian Treasury Ministry General Revenue Directorate, has said that his office collected 43.5 million balboas in January 1989.

Levy also discussed the attachment procedures and said the Panama Canal Commission owes 77.2 million balboas to the Panamanian Government.

[Begin Levy recording] In January 1989, we collected 43.5 million balboas in taxes, which is 70 percent of what we collected in January 1988. In January 1988 we collected 61.5 million balboas. There is an 18 million balboa difference, which is broken down as follows: Between $10 and $11 million were not received as a result of the aggression against our country and the rest, in other words the other $7 or $8 million, were not received because of the drop in economic activity, which reduced state revenues.

We noticed, however, that the numbers are slightly better for January 1989 than they were for September or October 1988. We believe that in February we will also collect 70 percent of what we collected in February 1988. [end recording]

Argentina

Caputo Denies Menem's Charges on Falklands

PY2402180289 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0956 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 24 Feb (TELAM)—Foreign Minister Dante Caputo has denied that his ministry advocates "a de-Malvinization process." He added that the Malvinas Islands issue "is very important, but not the only one."

Caputo referred to the so-called "nationalists who do great damage to the country."

Regarding the remarks made by Justicialist presidential candidate Carlos Menem about the Malvinas, Caputo said that [words indistinct].

Caputo made these remarks last night in the Ezeiza International Airport before departing for the United States to preside over the UN General Assembly that will debate the creation of a peace-keeping force in Namibia.

Caputo said: "I do not advocate a de-Malvinization process." He added: "For almost 6 years we have been working permanently to make progress in the recovery of the sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands."

He recalled that the work for the recovery of the sovereignty of the islands "was made within the framework of the 1982 military defeat, with an absolutely intransigent British Government, and within the context of all the problems facing Argentina." Regarding the progress done by his ministry, Caputo said that "there are no miracles," only "the possibility to work responsibly."

Caputo said that the Malvinas Islands are very important but that there are also other important issues that affect national interests. He reiterated that the Malvinas is a "very important issue, but not the only one." [passage omitted]

Dante Caputo Returns From UN Meeting

PY2502173489 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1518 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 25 Feb (TELAM)—Dante Caputo, chairman of the UN General Assembly and Argentine foreign minister, today returned to the country after attending the UN plenary session.

Argentina Foreign Minister Dante Caputo arrived at Ezeiza International Airport aboard a Pan American airplane from New York. Caputo left the airport without making any statement to the newsmen who were waiting for him.

Justicialist Paper Views Recovery of Falklands

PY2402205289 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 24 Feb 89 p 4

[Text] Mendoza Governor Jose Bordon will submit a foreign policy program to the National Justicialist Congress. The program proposes the recovery of the Malvinas Islands through diplomatic channels "without resorting to harassment or to the threat to begin hostilities, as if those were the only methods to force Great Britain to negotiate." After this statement, which contradicts recent remarks by presidential candidate Carlos Menem that it might again be necessary to shed blood—remarks that Menem later referred to as a metaphor—the proposal adds that "neither should we adopt the position that advocates giving in to force, reestablishing relations with Great Britain, and for the time being leaving aside the question of sovereignty."

The 40-page document, which was drawn up by Bordon, who is also secretary of international relations of the Justicialist Party, states that "the attitude of the United States toward Argentina has never been that of a country that wants to create sound and permanent ties on the basis of a general, negotiated understanding."

"Our main responsibility is to begin comprehensive negotiations with the United States, select the goals that are common to both sides, establish the responsibility of each side, establish the respective jurisdictions, and identify the issues that are important for them and for us," the document adds.

The proposal goes on to say that "Latin America comes first for Latin Americans, just like the Atlantic Alliance comes first for them."

The document, which was submitted to Menem and to Justicialist National Council President Antonio Caffiero in December, adds that "it is necessary to adopt an all-encompassing, realistic foreign policy, marked by continuity."

Alluding to the work of Foreign Minister Dante Caputo, the document states that "with the Justicialist program it will be possible to overcome a very long period marked by instability, by the overestimation of our role at an international level, by unrealistic positions, and by discontinuity."

The document states that "the basic premise of the Radical administration is that the government's foreign policy has been insufficient, because the restoration of democracy could not produce the change we had expected in the structure of international interests, as is clearly shown by the Malvinas, the South Atlantic, and the foreign debt issues."

Concerning the foreign debt, the document notes that the "Group of Eight" and the Cartagena Consensus "may play a key regional role, ranging from political pressure to the creation of a forum for political coordination for debtor countries to set uniform and rational renegotiation criteria."

Justicialist Congress Approves Platform

PY2702004789 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 26 Feb 89 pp 1, 13

[Excerpts] (NA-DYN)—Mar del Plata Peronist presidential candidate Carlos Menem spoke for a brief 15 minutes before the Justicialist Party National Congress yesterday. Due to previous agreements, the congress deliberated for only two hours during which the party platform was approved with full consensus.

Peronist Political Secretary Jose Manuel de la Sota revealed yesterday that the platform would call for a "negotiated moratorium" on the foreign debt, confirmed that military intelligence would be limited to external problems and ratified the party's willingness to undertake constitutional reform. [passage omitted]

The Peronist platform was the result of intense negotiations which ended with a last minute summit between Menem and party chairman Antonio Cafiero.

De la Sota explained that a "negotiated moratorium" meant that the Argentine strategy would "include the reduction of debt principal and a grace period to be agreed on by creditor countries."

He stressed, however, that if an agreement could not be reached with creditors, then "Congress will be entitled to take the measures it considers necessary, including the most extreme ones."

Asked to define the Peronists' defense strategy, de la Sota underlined that "it has been established that the Armed Forces will only be in charge of external intelligence, because we want them to be prepared to defend us from possible foreign aggressions."

Internal upheaval or terrorist attacks like that againt La Tablada will be crushed by a highly trained special force which will be under the command of the President through the Interior Ministry. As examples he mentioned the "elite" forces created by the United States, Spain, Italy and Germany.

Finally, he indicated that "as General (Juan Domingo) Peron said, those are police problems under the jurisdiction of the courts." [passage omitted]

'Cordoba Column' Claims Responsibility for Holdup

PY2402165589 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1440 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Feb—An alleged terrorist group that calls itself the "Cordoba Column," a faction of the Popular Resistance Front (FRP), via a telephone call claimed responsibility for the robbery of a bank branch in the city of Cordoba. During the attack a policeman was wounded and 2.1 million australes were stolen.

A man with a clear Cordoba accent was calling long-distance because the telephone counter was heard on the line. He said that the robbery "marks the beginning of the expropriation of funds that will be use to finance a struggle toward a final victory."

The man called himself "Commander Victor." He said: "We regret the inconveniences we caused to our fellow workers" in the bank and to those who were visiting the bank.

The unidentified man hung up without answering any questions except about the meaning of the acronym FRP which was initially thought to be a signature.

It should be recalled that the FRP has already issued two communiques in Montevideo in relation to the terrorist attack on La Tablada. The FRP has charged that some of the arrested FRP members have been shot and that another has disappeared.

Chile

Interior Minister Speaks on Constitutional Reform

PY2402182689 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] Interior Minister Carlos Caceres today said he has been analyzing the national political situation since last October. He said that a selection process has taken place among the political parties and that is why they have launched their candidates and expressed their positions. [passage omitted]

The minister was asked about the possibility of holding a plebiscite on the necessary reforms.

[Begin recording] [Caceres] The only reason for holding a plebiscite would be in connection with the possibility of reforming the Constitution, and this subject is being analyzed by the government.

[Unidentified reporter] Would you rule out the possibility of holding a plebiscite?

[Caceres] No, I do not rule out the possibility of holding a plebiscite, as long as a decision is made regarding a constitutional reform. [end recording]

Although Minister Caceres did not point out which aspects could be reformed, he admitted that the government is studying the possibility, as well as an explanatory law [ley de caracter interpretativo].

[Begin recording] [Caceres] An explanatory law is being studied by the government to allow those former government officials to become candidates.

[Reporter] When do you think it is the appropriate moment to decide whether or not to carry out constitutional reforms?

[Caceres] The Constitution sets deadlines. If a reform is to be made, the plebiscite must be held before next June. [end recording]

Outlawed Communist Committee Issues Statement

PY2402235989 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] A committee of the outlawed Communist Party a few hours ago issued a statement reiterating the position that the opposition must abandon the policy that has kept some sectors out of the opposition accord. The statement was made by the so-called Estacion Central Community Committee of the Communist Party. The committee added that it approved the entire text of the call for the 15th party congress, which supports above all the policy of rebellion of the masses. The statement is signed by Galvarino Melo, Rosa Catalan, and Iris Pizarro. The rejection of the exclusionary policy adopted by the opposition accord is one of the main sources of tension in the Chilean opposition.

'Terrorist' Incidents Reported 25-27 Feb

FPMR-Police Clash

PY2702124589 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Text] Following a clash with Carabineros in Santiago, terrorists of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front—FPMR—left behind a bag containing subversive material.

This incident occurred in Las Rejas, in the John Kennedy neighborhood. Police personnel patrolling the sector in a bus stopped a group of individuals and asked them to identify themselves. The group of terrorists attacked the policemen. During the shootout the terrorists fled, leaving behind explosives.

According to Carabineros, the following material was abandoned: cartridge cases, 4 Molotov cocktails, an FPMR flag, a piece of TNT-type explosive, and 4 hand grenades. Despite police efforts the terrorists were not captured. They escaped through passages in the John Kennedy neighborhood.

Arms Company Holdup

PY2502015189 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Five alleged members of a terrorist group have carried out a spectacular holdup of a company that imports arms. The company is in a mall at the corner of Providencia and Tobalaba Avenues. [passage omitted]

The attackers took 5 9mm T Z Parabellum pistols and 2 special .38 caliber [words indistinct] revolvers. [passage omitted]

Police sources said that the holdup may have been carried out by the Lautaro extremist group.

Actions in Lota, Concepcion

PY2602012889 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Report from Concepcion by Jose Miguel Concha]

[Excerpts] Police sources have reported that unidentified terrorists early this morning detonated two bombs in the city of Lota. The bombs knocked down one high voltage tower, partially destroyed two more towers, and caused a power outage in the Arauco Province and in Lota as well. [passage omitted]

Carabineros personnel determined that the two bombs were made of 800 and 200 grams of ammonium gelignite, respectively, and that they were detonated by fire. No injuries have been reported.

About four members of the self-styled Manuel Rodriguez Front unexpectedly broke into the studios of Radio Regional of Concepcion—at 251 Caupolican St., 2d floor—at 0700 today. The press office of the radio station confirmed that at that time radio operator Ernesto Contreras was at the studios by himself. The attackers hit Contreras slightly and then locked him up. After broadcasting a 1-minute tape containing subversive slogans, the attackers left the station. [passage omitted]

Colombia

Official Calls FARC Proposal Delaying Tactic

PA2402235489 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 2309 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Report by Alvaro Pardo]

[Excerpts] Bogota, 24 Feb (REUTER)—The Colombian Government today described a proposal by the country's largest guerrilla group to create a commission for a peace dialogue as a delaying tactic. However, some have called for approval of the initiative.

Meanwhile, Radio Cadena Nacional (RCN) quoted sources close to the Presidency as saying that the government is about to decide whether it will begin direct talks with two rebel groups, the pro-Indian Quintin Lame and the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT). [passage omitted]

In reply to the FARC proposal, presidential peace adviser Rafael Pardo Rueda said that the government wants concrete steps and not proposals that delay the peace process.

"To consider this proposal would mean to take a step backward, because the means for direct dialogue already exist," Pardo Rueda told reporters. [passage omitted]

Former President Misael Pastrana Borrero said that he welcomes the FARC initiative and added that although he has yet to decide whether to participate in the proposed commission, the government cannot reject it. "The proposal is directed to the people and not to the government," he added.

"All possibilities must be considered to see if they are feasible. The first thing that must be done is to try to establish contact with the rebels and afterward we must inform the government about the objectives, scope, and the possibilities of implementing the peace plan," Pastrana told newsmen.

Catholic Church spokesmen insisted that peace can only be achieved when there is dialogue among all rebel groups. In a communique, the church spokesmen said that they are willing to participate in all initiatives that could bring about reconciliaton.

However, the church did not directly state its intention to become part of the commission proposed by the FARC.

Regarding the possibility of beginning direct talks with the other two guerrilla groups—the Quintin Lame and the PRT—the RCN said that the government will make its decision after the two groups have stated their willingness to achieve peace and to stop their armed struggle.

Nevertheless, this information has yet to be confirmed by the office of the presidential adviser for peace.

Government To Study Proposal

PA2502123989 Paris AFP in Spanish 0530 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Text] Bogota, 24 Feb (AFP)—In a reversal of its position, the Colombian Government announced tonight that it will study a guerrilla proposal to form a commission of prominent people whose mission will be to verify the rebel groups' willingness to achieve peace.

Government Minister Raul Orejuela made the announcement himself, demonstrating a radical change in his position. He had rejected the rebel initiative 24 hours before, terming it a "delaying tactic."

(?The prominent people) proposed for the commission are former Presidents Alfonso Lopez and Misael Pastrana; Cardinal Mario Revollo; Fabio Echeverry, former president of the National Association of Industrialists; and Hernando Santos, publisher of EL TIEMPO, the country's most influential newspaper.

Former Liberal President Lopez, on insisting in [words indistinct] to end the bloodshed, said: "I am willing to listen to all those who in good or bad faith have something to suggest."

Former President Misael Pastrana, who heads the Conservative opposition, said he plans to contact the other persons mentioned by the FARC to study the matter, although [words indistinct].

Police Break Up Kidnapping Ring; 15 Killed

PA2402130789 Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] Cali—Sublieutenant Roberto Merchan Barrera, 26, the commander of a Cali Metropolitan Police special service squad, and Cali policemen Hermes Alfredo Rosero and Luis Jorge Acosta are members of the kidnapping gang that was dismantled last night during two Cali police operations in urban and rural areas of Cali and Palmira.

Fifteen kidnappers were killed in yesterday's police operations, during which the police tried to rescue businessman Victor Alvarado. Alvarado, 30, is a car dealer who was kidnapped in Cali on 7 February.

Former policeman Efrain Gutierrez Justi was also a member of the gang. He apparently owned the country house in which the gang was holding Alvarado. The kidnappers were demanding a 150-million peso ransom.

Lucas Santanilla, Ramon Salazar, Ames Rios, Jose Posada, Armando Roda Aguirre, Romulo Veravalle, Oscar Escobar, Manuel Garcia, and two NN's [not further identified] are among the kidnappers who were killed during the police operations.

Eleven weapons and one fragmentation grenade were found at the kidnappers' hideout.

UP Supports Agreement With Venezuela

PA2602044789 Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 20 Feb 89 p 7-A

[Statement issued by the Patriotic Union; date and place not given]

[Text] The Patriotic Union [UP] National Coordinating Board, after closely examining the agreement recently signed by the presidents of Venezuela and Colombia in Caracas, declares the following:

We believe that the so-called conflict between Colombia and Venezuela regarding the delimitation of maritime and undersea borders in the Gulf of Venezuela must be solved by means of a negotiated solution, thus preventing an unnecessary confrontation between our nations.

We therefore consider the agreement to be positive, especially because the points of the agreement are not just limited to determining the logistics of the negotiations. They also bring forth new perspectives for border integration, joint border development, and for the protection of the rights of Colombian nationals living in Venezuela.

The UP is in favor of developing a closer relationship with Venezuela directed toward achieving economic integration and the joint exploitation of the Gulf's natural resources. We feel it is important for both countries to improve their relations with each other and to meet to discuss these issues.

Barco Administration Criticized for Nonaction
PA2602043589 Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish
17 Feb 89 p 5-a

[Editorial: "How Long Can This Go On?"]

[Text] The country is fragile. It is becoming heartrendingly vulnerable. Every day it is subjected to large-scale damage that is not expeditiously repaired. The nation's total resources are eroded every day. Moreover, since the institutional system is powerless, any foreign entity, no matter how insignificant, can attempt acts of aggression with the knowledge that those acts will go unpunished and that there will be no reaction whatsoever.

That is the deplorable result of 29 months of this administration. The erosion of values has been constant. It is surprising that its destructive effect has not spiralled. It seems to have maintained a steady rhythm, a circumstance that allows Colombians to become resigned to decadence and to be content with the meager satisfaction of having survived one more day.

That is, at least, the point of view we have noticed in the president of the Republic. "We are all right so far," is the phrase that he babbles whenever there is a catastrophe. In every case, the people know that we have descended several pegs, but they console themselves with the thought that having come to the edge of the precipice, we have not fallen in.

The president apparently believes that all evils are eased with time. That is his recipe. He probably feels that the important thing is for wounds to form a scab. In the face of the daily sacrifice of human lives, the president remains unmoving, hoping that the public will forget what happened. Apparently, there really is such an effect, because today's dramatic bloody events leave no time to think about yesterday's victims.

Time is a factor that deserves the highest consideration. This is especially true now, when the pace of life demands rapid decisions and the development of technology makes it possible for those decisions to be made accurately. In the Barco administration, a formidable imbalance is being created between the attacks to which the country is subjected and the extremely sluggish governmental action. Economic opportunities are lost; administration action is paralyzed; human lives are being sacrificed.

The cost at present is 6,000 murders a year. It may be thought that Colombia's inhabitants can continue to pay this price for another year and a half. However, the institutions have not been standing up as well.

First, it was the system of justice that succumbed. Practically nothing of it has remained. The courts, because of the pressure to which they were subjected, were allowed to make de facto rather than de jure rulings, and everything else came afterward. Today Colombians are accustomed to doing without that service.

Many other institutions are languishing. We do not know if they will last until 7 August 1990. However, today we are interested in pointing out the difficulties to which the Armed Forces have been subjected in this very long and apparently interminable process of deterioration of public order.

The Colombian military has all our support. We are on their side. They have earned the admiration and solidarity of all the people. Moreover, they are admirable for having had to participate in a unilateral war under tremendously disadvantageous conditions. They have also demonstrated a formidable ability to resist all the temptations to which they have been subjected.

Military strategists say that a lengthy war is more destructive for regular forces than for guerrillas, especially when the war is known to be impossible to win. We cannot deny that this is what is happening in Colombia.

The latest events in the military structure, the numerous accusations against Army officials, the weapons purchases, the proliferation of subversive fronts, and the increase in the number of victims form a pathetic picture that should worry all good citizens.

The harm that is being done to the country is so great that it should be repaired immediately. It should not be allowed to continue. However, the Barco administration is again trusting in the healing powers of the passage of time. Every morning it confirms that it has survived and it launches a proclamation of victory. With an attitude that we do not hesitate to call egoistic, the Barco administration resolves to avoid looking around.

Because of this unpardonable habit, the Armed Forces are abandoned, subject to having the correspondent of a foreign magazine portray them to the world as an institution that has lost its morality.

Trade With Hungary To Increase Significantly

PA2602221089 Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 20 Feb 89 p 7-A

[Summary] In a recent meeting between Colombian Foreign Relations Minister Julio Londono and Hungarian Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Varkonyi in Hungary, an agreement was reached to increase trade between Colombia and Hungary from $14 million to $171 million. According to Londono, the Hungarian Government is willing to give Colombia a $185-million credit for improving its technology in telecommunications and agriculture.

Financial Sector Reports Increased 1988 Profits

PA2402045789 Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 19 Feb 89 p 8-A

[Summary] The financial sector in Colombia took a giant step toward recovery in 1988 by earning profits of 58.179 billion pesos, 4.8 times more than in 1987. Colombian banks reported a profit of 30.463 billion pesos (726 percent more than in 1987); financial corporations achieved a profit of 12.453 billion pesos (556 percent more than in 1987); savings and loan corporations reported profits of 8.088 billion pesos (73.6 percent more than in 1987); and commercial finance companies reported a profit of 7.175 billion pesos (299 percent more than in 1987).

Also, private banks earned 11.023 billion pesos in 1987 and 20.996 billion pesos in 1988. Mixed capital (national and foreign) banks reported a profit of 4.094 billion pesos in 1988 (30.3 percent more than in 1987).

Profits earned by the banks accounted for 52.3 percent of the profits reported in the financial sector. Finance corporations accounted for 21.4 percent; savings and loan corporations 13.9 percent; and commercial finance companies 12.3 percent.

San Andres Gets English-Language TV Programs

PA1902035689 Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 14 Feb 89 p 2-A

[Summary] In one of his final acts as communications minister, Pedro Martin Leyes on 11 February inaugurated Telecaribe's new English-language programs for the San Andres Island residents. During his speech at the inauguration ceremony in San Andres, Martin announced that the government will spend almost 2 billion pesos in the area for telephone and construction projects as well as to install a new television tower. On 14 February, Communications Minister Martin will be replaced by Carlos Lemos Simmonds.

Paraguay

Finance Minister Declares New Economic Measures

PY2302174889 Asuncion Cerro Cora Sistema Nacional de Television in Spanish 1534 GMT 23 Feb 89

[News conference by Finance Minister Enzo Debernardi;. date and place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] The national government today established a single, free, and fluctuating exchange rate for national economic operations. Finance Minister Enzo Debernardi said the following:

[Begin recording] The president of the Republic has adopted several measures meant to change the course of our economy. They are the following:

First, the government establishes a free, fluctuating foreign currency exchange rate for import and export operations of goods, services and capital movements, including public and private financial payments. This means that we have adopted a single, total, fluctuating exchange rate.

The Central Bank will regulate this exchange system to prevent fluctuations caused by speculative activities from harming the economy.

The government will establish limits on the credits granted by the Central Bank to the public sector in order to appropriately control currency issuance. In other words, the public sector will be closely controlled to avoid inflation.

The foreign currency taxes on exports have been abolished. They are over. Exporters will collect all their foreign currency through the national banking system, not through the Central Bank, but through the national banking system.

The government establishes the creation of a temporary Fund of Budget Compensation to face this problem. This fund establishes a tax withholding of 1 percent on cotton exports and 1 to 10 percent on other export products. The economic team will regulate this tax witholding on exports.

The government will adopt the necessary measures to make public service companies become self-financing, according to specific programs. Public services companies will be self-financing.

The administration of the companies ACEPAR [Paraguayan Steel] and Vallemi [National Cement Institute] will be submitted to a strict control by the Finance Ministry and the Central Bank to rationalize as much as possible their services, costs, and budgets.

The government will carry out specific studies on the financial and economic situation of the State Merchant Fleet, the Paraguayan Air Lines, the Paraguayan Housing and Urban Planning Institute, the Agriculture Development Agency, and the Paraguayan Alcohol Administration to adopt the measures and decisions most convenient to national interests.

In order to reduce and regulate the adjustment oil and fuel prices, PETROPAR [Paraguayan Petroleum Inc] will use its own reserves to absorb a substantial part of the price increase resulting from exchange fluctuation.

The credits granted by the Central Bank to finance production will be increased within the limits compatible with the monetary stability policy.

The measures adopted today become effective immediately, and will be coordinated by the national economic team. The Technical Planning Secretariat of the presidency will coordinate, as soon as possible, the preparation of a national development plan.

These were the measures adopted by the government. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Announces Debt Renegotiation

PY2302234589 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 23 Feb 89 p 13

[Text] Very important economic announcements were made by government officials this noon. Finance Minister Enzo Debernardi said that "a substantial portion of the foreign debt will be renegotiated, and the remainder will be paid to the extent advisable within the country's economic situation. It will not be necessary to ask for a moratorium. The entire foreign debt will be paid. Paraguay will not waive its commitments. However, the payment schedule will have to be discussed again in an atmosphere of understanding and harmony."

In a news conference, the finance minister said that "utility rates—such as for electric power, water, and telephones—will not double. The rates will not remain unchanged, but they will not double. They will be self-financed, but they will not double."

Asked if a salary increase is foreseen to cope with this increase in utility rates, Debernardi said: "Yes. Salaries will have to be adjusted. We will follow up on this."

Debernardi also confirmed that Paraguay's foreign debt currently totals $2 billion, including $300 million in overdue payments. He said the country's current monetary reserves barely total $160 million. Regarding payment for the main farm products, cotton and soybeans, the minister said prices will be set by the free supply and demand system, that is, the free market system. "A new era is beginning," Debernardi stressed.

Agriculture Minister Bertoni said: "Prices will be favorable to farmers, considering that the international prices for both products are increasing steadily."

Discusses Foreign Debt Further

PY2402014389 Asuncion RPC Television Network in Spanish 2316 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Panel discussion with guest Finance Minister Enzo Debernardi, hosted by journalists Christian Nielsen and Cristian Torres, and by economist Pablo Herken during the "Actualidades 13" program, in the television studio—live]

[Excerpts] [Herken] Mr Minister, I believe that the government today showed a firm attitude toward change and a clear political will, because it has introduced a major change in the course of the economy. Today there has been a vital change in the economy just as there was a vital political change on 2 and 3 February. Paraguay is now experiencing a very special economic situation. What were the decisive factors for the adoption of such a drastic decision? What were the vital elements of the analysis in which you decided to end the previous system and to run the risk—because there are major risks—of adopting a single, free, and fluctuating exchange rate system?

[Debernardi] As you know—and you have more accurate information because you are a specialist—modern theories establish that politics and economy are not as far apart as was believed in the past. Politics is a synonym for social life, and the economy has an influence on social life. Consequently, this is the link between politics and the economy. The country, under the leadership of General Rodriguez, decided to advance toward democracy; consequently, it would have been totally impossible to keep a false economy like the one in which we were living. Ours was a false, distorted economy. To live in an atmosphere of democratic opening and to maintain an economy that does not reflect this atmosphere would have been a total contradiction. This was the main reason. The president asked me for my opinion, which I gave to him. He agreed to it and asked me to unify the viewpoints of all the economic sectors of the government in order to make new decisions. [passage omitted]

[Herken] Of all these measures, which rather than an economic package, make up, as you put it, a set of general guidelines that will set the general course—the details will have to be defined later—of all these measures, I am most concerned about the consequences on the external front. If I am not wrong, the servicing of our foreign debt surpasses $350 million, while the public sector's unpaid overdue obligations near $300 million.

[Debernardi] Right.

[Herken] Our foreign reserves are obviously insuffient to cushion this major process of exchange rate modification that has been enforced. You have already said that the foreign debt will be renegotiated. I would like you to give

us more details about what you referred to as the renegotiation of the foreign debt. IMF and World Bank missions will be in our country next week. Will these agencies be asked to provide technical and financial assistance? Or shall we follow a policy of austerity, making a sacrifice to repay the debt, in order not to be, so to speak, subordinated to some international agencies? I see no chance of repaying our foreign debt without the participation of the agencies I mentioned. And without this type of renegotiation I see no chance of success for this economic program.

[Debernardi] When I talked about the renegotiation of the foreign debt, I probably used the wrong words, and I regret having done that. Our country will repay its foreign debt. There are other countries which are—and I do not mean to offend anyone—acting like beggars. Paraguay will repay its foreign debt. We are a serious country, and we want to be a serious country. The only thing that we will renegotiate—if you want to use that verb—is the method for repaying short-term obligations. We believe the economy will recuperate so that within a reasonable period—probably a couple of years—we expect to return to the normal repayment schedule. They will have to have patience with us during these 2 years. We have good reason to believe they will have patience with us.

We have just begun talks with one of our major creditors. I am very sorry, but I cannot give further details because this creditor asked us not to provide details at this initial phase. We have found a wonderful response in the talks with this creditor. Therefore, I have great confidence that this situation will not become really serious, whereas if we do what technicians refer to as calling the IMF—this means to call the IMF to help us—the IMF will set conditions that will be so hard that our people will suffer a lot. And we want to avoid this. We have faith that we will be able to handle this situation without calling the IMF.

[Torres] Part of the renegotiation will undoubtedly involve the credits granted by commercial banks, rather than the credits granted by the international agencies, right?

[Debernardi] The credits, which we could call soft, that were granted by the IDB and the World Bank cannot be renegotiated because they are so soft that I would say one cannot think of anything softer. However, during the next year or year and a half, they will have to have a bit of patience with us. As for the commercial banks, we will obviously have to talk very clearly.

[Herken] Mr Minister, please let me return to a point that I believe is a bit contradictory. You said that if the IMF is called, the conditions for economic and financial reorganization that this agency would impose will involve an extreme sacrifice for the people and for the economy. I believe though, that one of the key attitudes for ensuring the success of the economic program that the government decided to impose today is a maximum of austerity and sacrifice, no matter the economic or socio-political cost. Today, with this set of general guidelines, I would say that Paraguay is enjoying international prestige, because—I reiterate—the decision that was made is consistent with a position that would be totally supported, in general terms, by any international agency like the IMF or the World Bank. Such guidelines include the liberalization of the exchange market, the free organization of the economy on the basis of parameters that reflect the real situation, and a shock policy. Summing up, this a shock. I see a sort of contradiction at this point, because one should not be afraid of the conditions that might be imposed by international agencies, because I would say that some of the conditions of this program are much stronger than those that might be imposed by international agencies. I wonder whether it's just me who is seeing this contradiction or whether....

[Debernardi, interrupting] No, you are right. I would like to answer your question with a comparison that might seem a bit naive: If I had to solve a very difficult problem, I'd rather try to solve it with a brother than with a foreigner. Consequently, we will try to find a proper solution to this problem among Paraguayans, among us. If we fail, we will call the IMF. [passage omitted]

Former Officials' Bank Accounts Frozen
PY2302152589 Asuncion HOY in Spanish
23 Feb 89 pp 22, 23

[Excerpt] Judge Eladio Duarte Caballero has ordered the freezing of all money deposited in Swiss banks by the former regime's officials that are currently being tried on charges brought by Lawyer Pedro Abilio Rolon and Attorney General Clotildo Jimenez Benitez.

Judge Duarte Carballo has asked the Swiss Government to report on the overall amount of money currently deposited in the accounts of Delfin Ugarte Centurion, Mario Abdo Benitez, J. Eugenio Jacquet, Adan Godoy Jimenez, Cesar Romeo Acosta, Manuel Modesto Esquivel, Raul Ernesto Villalba, Carlos Antonio Ortiz Ramirez, Sabino Augusto Montanaro, Juan Eudes Pereira, Ramon Aquino, and Justo Eris Almada. All these former officials are charged with committing crimes against public property, and are being kept in custody at various police precincts. [passage ommitted]

Social Security Institute Director Appointed
PY2302134789 Asuncion HOY in Spanish
22 Feb 89 p 6

[Summary] Jose Maria Fernandez Rojas has been designated both director general and Board of Directors president of the Social Security Institute. Fernandez replaces Dr Hugo Dejesus Araujo.

Housing, Urban Planning Head Appointed

PY2302134389 Asuncion HOY in Spanish
23 Feb 89 p 7

[Summary] Through an Executive Branch decree, Architect Juan A. Cristaldo Sosa has been appointed president of the Paraguayan Housing and Urban Planning Institute (IPVU). Cristaldo replaces Architect Emilio Napout.

Zairian Official Discusses Commerce, Assistance

PY2502180889 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish
25 Feb 89 p 1

[Text] Mokolo Wa Mpompo, the Zairian state commissioner for public work and territorial planning, is visiting Paraguay to exchange ideas on the establishment of commercial ties and on plans for reciprocal assistance in the industrial sector.

Mokolo Wa Mpompo is in Paraguay with a small entourage. The Zairian delegation arrived on 23 February aboard a private plane that landed at the Asuncion International Airport. Among the activities carried out by the Zairian official has been a meeting with Public Work Minister Porfirio Ruiz Diaz. During the meeting the two officials exchanged information.

It was reported that Mokolo Wa Mpompo has also made contact with members and leaders of the Paraguayan Industrial Union (UIP).

Peru

Cabinet Restructured, 4 Ministers Replaced

Foreign Minister Resigns

PY2402183589 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish
1800 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Luis Gonzalez Posada today announced his resignation. He said he will be replaced by Senator Guillermo Larco Cox. Gonzalez Posada said that this is not a cabinet crisis, but a cabinet restructuring.

[Begin Gonzalez Posada recording] I tendered my resignation in December, but the president and I decided to postpone it until Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez took office. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Housing Minister Resigns

PY2502030289 Madrid EFE in Spanish
0239 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Lima, 24 Feb (EFE)—Two cabinet ministers today confirmed their resignations. According to official sources a crisis of unpredictable consequences is taking shape in the government.

Foreign Minister Luis Gonzalez Posada, with 9 months at the ministry, and Housing Minister Luis Bedoya Velez, who has had the housing portfolio since July 1985, have confirmed to the press they have tendered their irrevocable resignations.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Armando Villanueva continues consultations on a cabinet reshuffle. On 22 February Villanueva announced that there would be a few cabinet changes "in the next few hours," but nothing happened until today.

On 22 February Villanueva also announced that he would continue at the head of the government. [passage omitted]

Garcia Makes Changes

PY2702034189 Madrid EFE in Spanish
0215 GMT 27 Feb 89

[Excerpts] Lima, 26 Feb (EFE)—Peruvian President Alan Garcia today ended the government crisis by appointing three new ministers and replacing the interior minister with Prime Minister Armando Villanueva, who will remain president of the Council of Ministers.

Villanueva will replace Vice Admiral Juan Soria, retired, as interior minister, and will leave his post as minister of the Presidency. President Alan Garcia has not yet reported who will be the new minister of the Presidency.

Senator Guillermo Larco Cox will replace Luis Gonzalez Posada as foreign minister; Antenor Orrego will be housing and construction minister, replacing Luis Bedoya Velez; and Carlos Raffo Dasso will be industry, commerce, tourism, and integration minister [titles as received], replacing Ivan Garcia. [passage omitted]

President Alan Garcia explained that the designation of Villanueva as interior minister, while he maintains his post as prime minister, is part of a "general reorganization of the government policy" to confront what he called the "main problem" of Peru: terrorism.

MRTA, Shining Path Carry Out Attacks

PY2402143189 Madrid EFE in Spanish
1811 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Lima, 23 Feb (EFE)—The police reported today that on 22 February four terrorist attacks were perpetrated against buildings and private residences in Lima. The bombings slightly damaged the Spanish Embassy and the Spanish commercial office. [not further identified]

Spanish Ambassador Nabor Garcia said that the explosion damaged some windows of the Spanish Embassy and of the offices of the Economy and Finance Ministry which face each other in the residential area of San Isidro.

The two buildings were damaged by the shock wave of a bomb that exploded at the adjacent residence of a high-ranking executive of the Financial Bank in the Miraflores neighborhood.

The Peruvian National Police said that the MRTA, whose top leader Victor Polay was arrested less than 3 weeks ago, left leaflets at the attack sites.

Terrorists also attacked a house in San Isidro neighborhood and a store that sells electric appliances in the Miraflores neighborhood.

On 21 February, the MRTA dynamited a businessman's residence in Lima because he refused to pay to the MRTA $15,000 as "revolutionary tax."

Journalistic sources say that on 22 February MRTA members attacked a police station in the town of Chosica, 40 km east of Lima, and that the police repelled the attack.

The state-run electricity company ELECTROPERU has confirmed that on the night of 22 February, Shining Path guerrillas knocked down 10 high-voltage pylons, causing blackouts in Lima and towns located within a radius of 700 km of Lima.

Shining Path Training Center Dismantled
PY2402151589 Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 24 Feb 89

[Text] A people's school and training center of the Shining Path terrorist group has been dismantled and the person in charge arrested. The building was located in Nane, in downtown metropolitan Lima.

The Antiterrorist Directorate has reported that this center was used to train new Shining Path members in terrorist ideology and strategy which they put into practice during the attack on the Chosica, Chaclacayo, El Agustino and (Vicarte) Central Road during the frustrated armed strike decreed by the Shining Path.

'Socialist Accord' Names Barrantes as Candidate
PY2502004989 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 16 Feb 89 p 3

[Text] In the face of a possible split in the United Left [IU], representatives of the Communist Revolutionary Party, the Socialist Convergence, and the Mariateguista Regional Committee, yesterday announced the formation of a party bloc called "Socialist Accord." The bloc also announced that its initial program is to present Alfonso Barrantes Lingan as presidential candidate in the 1990 elections.

Rejecting the possibility that this organization will lead to a conflict within the IU, Senator Enrique Bernales (PSR) [Socialist Revolutionary Party] referred to the Socialist Accord as the instrument that reflects the positions of the great majority of the First National Congress of the IU, held in January 1989.

On behalf of the Communist Revolutionary Party, Deputy Manuel Dammert officially launched the candidacy of former Lima Mayor Alfonso Barrantes Lingan for president of the Republic in 1990. He referred to him as "the natural IU candidate, with broad support from the grassroots."

The announcement of the organization of the Socialist Accord was made during a news conference at the Congress building. The announcement increased the likelihood of a split in the IU—a split first foreseen after the publication of the National Board Committee's so-called declaration of principles, which imposes a sort of "muzzle" on its militants.

During the news conference, Senator Bernales read the communique announcing the creation of the "Socialist Accord" in compliance with an initiative suggested by Barrantes Lingan. He made the suggestion at a meeting held to evaluate the country's political situation and to establish points of agreement for political work that will reflect the position of the leftist grassroots.

The communique also expresses the desire to promote democracy within the ranks and to encourage the grassroots to participate actively in electing their legitimate candidates in municipal elections. Several regional, sectorial, and local meetings will be held for this purpose.

In a brief statement, Socialist Convergence Senator Murrugarra stated that the dangers of a split is obvious from the fact that during the election of members of the National Board Committee, some representative forces were ignored and others were excluded.

"Within IU there are people with militarist and vanguardist positions who would like us to ignore the responsibility of the great majority of our 130,000 militants. We are going to persist, however, in our task to democratize IU, because the National Board Committee is no guarantee of the implementation of the agreements included in the party's program," Marrugarra stated.

Deputy Manuel Dammert, who announced the candidacy of Barrantes in the 1990 presidential elections, stated: "The electoral campaign for 1990 begins today, and the IU's candidate will be Barrantes, who has the support of the great majority."

He said that the candidates for municipal elections have not yet been decided. He said that they will propose direct, secret internal elections so that those elected will represent the majority.

Economic Pact Meeting Opens National Dialogue

PY2502175989 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0130 GMT 25 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Economy Minister Carlos Rivas Davila has announced that during the second economic pact meeting businessmen, workers, government officials, and church representatives unanimously approved the implementation of a great national dialogue. Rivas said a historic step has thus been taken in the effort to reach an accord, adding that Peru's problems can be solved.

All representative sectors of the country participated in this meeting, which was held in a cordial atmosphere and in which there was a general consensus.

Representatives of the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers, the National Confederation of Business Organizations, professional schools, Peruvian universities, the church, research institutions, and businessmen held a historic open dialogue with the government within the framework of the second economic pact meeting. This meeting, which was called by the government through the Economy Ministry, took place at the ESAN [School of Business Administration].

All the socio-economic and political forces that participated in the meeting established the guidelines for the creation of the so-called national economic pact for solidarity. They also agreed to implement the great national dialogue that the country demands to discuss important issues such as production, supply, exports, prices, and salaries. [passage omitted]

Venezuela

Payment of Private Debt Principal 'Suspended'

PA2302185889 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 1733 GMT 23 Feb 89

[Text] Caracas, 23 Feb (REUTER)—The Venezuelan paper EL NACIONAL said today that Venezuela has suspended payment on the principal of its private sector foreign debt. This $6 billion debt is currently being renegotiated.

EL NACIONAL said this week that the government decided to suspend payment on the private debt principal, which will total $472.3 million in 1989. The government made this decision after having suspended payment on the public debt principal, which was announced on 31 December.

Neither the Venezuelan finance minister nor the president of the Central Bank of Venezuela commented on the information released by the paper. EL NACIONAL did not give the source of its information.

Foreign bankers in Caracas said that thus far they have not received any official notification of the suspension of payment of the private debt principal. One banker, however, said he has not received any payment on that principal since the beginning of the year.

That banker said: "It is not clear to us whether the lack of payment is a regular delay or a sign of a new policy."

He added that during the current debt renegotiation, Venezuela gave signs that it would ask creditors to treat its private debt the same way that the public debt is treated. In other words, Venezuela seemed to be requesting a grace period, lower interest rates, and a longer period to pay the private debt.

Edgar Leal, the chief debt negotiator, traveled to New York this week to begin talks with creditor banks about a new restructuring of the $26-billion Venezuelan public debt.

On 31 December, Venezuela announced a 3-month suspension of the payment on the principal of its public debt, thus paving the way for new renegotiations. If that policy continues during 1989, Venezuela would not pay $1.532 billion this year.

At present, those who owe money to the private sector can buy dollars to pay the debt principal at the previous foreign exchange rate of 7.50 bolivares per dollar. In addition, they are guaranteed that they can exchange 9.5 percent of what they owe annually at that same rate. Payments have to be made within an 8-year period.

President Carlos Andres Perez' government announced that a floating exchange rate for all imports and debt payments will come into effect in 2 weeks, thus eliminating the current exchange rate of 14.50 bolivares per dollar.

Government Confirms Suspension

PA2602224889 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2129 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Caracas, 26 Feb (EFE)—Venezuelan official sources confirmed today that the suspension on the payment of the foreign debt decreed by the Venezuelan Government has now been extended to the private debt. The sources also announced a new strategy to renegotiate with the creditors.

In an interview published in today's edition of the Caracas morning paper EL NACIONAL, Venezuelan Central Bank President Pedro Tinoco said payments of the public and foreign debt, which total over $30 billion, will be renegotiated as a bloc.

Tinoco explained that President Carlos Andres Perez, who took office on 2 February, wants to renegotiate the debt to further defer payments and refinance the debt

interest. Tinoco said: We are lacking a program "that allows reducing the debt and receiving a large part of the discount (almost 50 percent) available in secondary markets."

Tinoco confirmed the information released this week by unofficial sources according to which the Venezuelan Government had decided to suspend payments of the principal and interest of the private sector foreign debt beginning 28 February. The Venezuelan private sector foreign debt totals approximately $4 billion.

Venezuela—the fourth largest Latin American debtor after Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina—decided to suspend payments of the principal of its public sector foreign debt on 17 January for a 90-day period, during which it expects to refinance the debt. As a result of that suspension, Venezuela did not pay $1.53 billion, to which it will now add $472 million, which corresponds to the suspension of the payment of the private sector debt. Those figures were provided by nongovernment experts.

Former Venezuelan President Jaime Lusinchi said the decision to suspend the payments of the public foreign debt was made because of the country's present financial crisis, the drastic reduction in foreign exchange reserves, and Venezuela's inability to obtain foreign loans. Last Saturday, Lusinchi accused the foreign banking sector, Venezuela's main creditor, of having led his country to believe the "deceptive assumption" that Venezuela would receive new loans if it fulfilled its payment obligations.

Tinoco also said Venezuela has had to allocate half its national revenue, about $10 billion, to pay the debt.

The Central Bank of Venezuela president subtly criticized the Lusinchi administration's policy concerning the debt and the administration of foreign exchange.

Lusinchi is a member of the social democratic Democratic Action Party, to which Carlos Andres Perez also belongs.

Tinoco acknowledged that his country needs foreign financial support, and he expressed confidence that financing will be obtained from the World Bank, the IMF, the Japanese Government, and several European countries. "Venezuela has a vast production capacity with large comparative advantages and with the ability to attract new national and foreign investments," he noted.

Tinoco said the economic austerity plan announced last week by President Perez has not been imposed by the IMF. However, he noted that the government presented it to the international organization, which "considered it appropriate for Venezuela."

Regarding the over $6 billion spent in imports in 1988 by the private sector, which the state funded with "preferential" foreign exchange (half the price of the free market), Tinoco noted the serious risks the country will face if it does not meet its obligations. He denied the IMF has recommended the "preferential" price of foreign exchange not be recognized—a measure to which it has conditioned its financial support, according to the press. He asserted that the IMF recommended that "reasonable criteria be established for payment."

The matter of preferential foreign exchange has become a serious problem for the government, which must fulfill the commitment contracted by the former administration, but it lacks the funds. Therefore, to pay the commitment, the government would have to resort to the international credit it hopes to obtain.

The authorities also opened an investigation this week into the alleged corruption in the granting of this exchange. This investigation led to former President Lusinchi's having to defend his presidential tenure last Saturday.

Agreement With IMF To Be Signed 28 Feb
PA2602232589 Paris AFP in Spanish
2210 GMT 26 Feb 89

[Text] Caracas, 26 Feb (AFP)—Venezuelan Finance Minister Eglee Iturbe and Coordination and Planning Minister Miguel Rodriguez traveled today to Washington to sign a letter of intention with the IMF.

According to plans, the letter should be signed on 28 February.

In Washington, Iturbe and Rodriguez will meet with Venezuelan Central Bank President Pedro Tinoco and Venezuelan foreign debt renegotiator Edgar Leal, who arrived in the U.S. capital yesterday.

The Venezuelan officials will meet with the IMF board on 27 February to conclude the terms of the letter of intention that the Venezuelan Government and an IMF mission drafted in Caracas last week.

The Venezuelan Congress asked the government officials to present the text of the letter to the senators before its signing, but the government refused to do so; therefore, the Venezuelan parliamentarians have suspended their sessions "until the letter is shown to us."

The social democratic government of Carlos Andres Perez, who has less than a month in office, prepared a program of macroeconomic changes, which according to critics, "responds perfectly well to the IMF prescriptions."

Venezuela, with an estimated $31-billion foreign debt, hopes to receive up to $5.2 billion in new loans from the IMF—$1.5 billion or more in the 1st year, and $450

million immediately—and additional resources from private banks, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank immediately after it signs the letter of intention with the IMF.

Spanish Daily Interviews President Perez

PM2402100889 Barcelona LA VANGUARDIA in Spanish 1 Feb 89 p 10

[Interview with President Carlos Andres Perez by Joaquim Ibarz in Caracas; date not given]

[Text] Caracas—Carlos Andres Perez has become the champion of a Latin American front to secure better terms for servicing the foreign debt, believing that the current repayment terms are "obscene" because the creditor countries are causing a financial drain which prevents development.

"The developing world's debt is not repayable on the current terms," the Venezuelan statesman stressed in an interview granted to LA VANGUARDIA. "The proper thing," he added, "would be not to repay more than 20 percent of total exports. In order to achieve this we Latin Americans should unite with the aim of reducing the debt to the terms of the secondary market [mercado secundario]."

According to the president, the moratorium on repayments decreed by Venezuela a month ago "is neither a device for negotiation nor a device for confrontation, but the proof that we do not have the money to repay. We entered this situation because we are repaying on impossible terms." He volunteered the information that in 1988 Venezuela paid its creditors $5.6 billion, equivalent to 70 percent of its exports.

"Our average repayments have been over 50 percent of exports. We must find ways to link our repayments to the prices of exports and the new flows of capital. But nor should we be opposed to terms being set for new loans. Creditors have a right to make sure that their money will be used rationally in appropriate projects, because otherwise we will repeat the current situation."

U.S. Interest

The Venezuelan leader, who spoke with George Bush in Washington a few weeks ago, said that he feels encouraged because the United States has displayed new interest in the debt problem. "We must take advantage of the situation in order not to thwart development and undermine democracy."

Carlos A. Perez stated that one of the UN specialized agencies conducted a study of the debt problem and reached the final conclusion that no country could devote more than 20 percent of its exports to servicing it. "When Germany complained after World War I that it could not repay its debt because it was paying 24 percent of its exports, the Bank for International Settlements in Basel—an agency of the victorious powers—accepted that its reasoning was correct." "I say this," he added, "in order to highlight how the industrialized countries are treating us. What they are doing is an intolerable exaction; they have set obscene terms for us. Every country should pay in accordance with its real ability." He stated that the debtor country's economic and macroeconomic situation, as well as the value of its exports, should be analyzed in order to determine that ability to pay.

"Venezuela could perhaps pay 15 percent of its exports without sacrificing the development process. Costa Rica perhaps could not pay even 5 percent. Each country's situation should be taken into account. In line with this, the problem of interest rates and the new flows of credit into our countries should also be tackled. Debt, trade, and new credits must be interlinked."

[Ibarz] Alan Garcia's experience of not paying more than 10 percent of exports has not exactly been successful.

[Perez] To charge Alan Garcia's policy with failure is not in keeping with the facts. If Peru had paid what it should for its debt, democracy in the country would have disappeared long ago, because Peru has absolutely no ability to pay. And 10 percent is more than Peru can pay. Perhaps Peru's mistake was to adopt a confrontational stance and to act on its own.

[Ibarz] How did Venezuela fall so deeply into debt during the very years when the price of oil rose so much?

[Perez] What happened in Venezuela was incredible. I was president from 1974 to 1979. Oil prices certainly rose during those years, but the highest price during my term was $11. Now it has fallen to $13 or $14. The rise was considerable, compared with the $250 which was being paid per barrel before 1973. [figures as published] I tried to take advantage of the rise in order to achieve more rapid growth for Venezuela. And I also contracted debts on extremely favorable terms for the country. The debt contracted during my term is represented in the assets which were created at that time, in the development projects which were carried out. When I left the Presidency, an excessive rise—twice what it reached during my term—began to occur. The incoming president (Luis Herrera Campins) stated that I had left him a mortgaged Venezuela. At that time, the debt totaled $9 billion, but we had assets worth $13 billion invested abroad. We still had a net surplus.

Carlos A. Perez stressed that during Hererra Campins' term, oil "rose, and rose, and rose" until it reached $34, while the debt rose from $9 billion to $32 billion.

[Perez] This is what is incomprehensible. And we Venezuelans still cannot understand what happened.

[Ibarz] Where did so much money end up?

[Perez] It was wasted, squandered. What happened in Venezuela in those years was appalling.

"Be of Service as Far as You Can"

[Ibarz] The news media suggest that you are now the new leader of Latin America. Are you acting as such?

[Perez] You know, when you are committed to these struggles, what you want is to do as well as possible and be of service as far you can. But if you set out with the intention of exercising leadership, that deprives you of authority and weakens you. I aim only to do what I want, what I believe, what I think should be done in Latin America. I am a thoroughgoing integrationist. I believe that we can accomplish nothing unless we succeed in coordinating our activity. Venezuela's solutions not in Venezuela but within that coordination which will give us the capacity and ability to negotiate with the great economic powers of the world [sentence as published]. I would say the same thing about the political sphere, especially in Latin America, where we must coexist with the United States, with whom we must maintain good relations but with whom we must act with some bargaining power.

Flexible Sphere

[Ibarz] What can social democracy offer Latin America's impoverished societies?

[Perez] Intellectual perceptions in the ideological sphere have changed considerably; technology has been an earthquake for orthodox perceptions about politics. But there is no doubt that democratic socialism offers a much more flexible, less dogmatic sphere, more in touch with the peoples' real conditions and aspirations for progress, change, and transformation.

[Ibarz] It was you who proposed that the pope act as mediator in the dispute between Chile and Argentina in order to resolve the Beagle Channel dispute. Could he play the same role in the difficult dispute between Colombia and Venezuela over sovereignty over the Gulf of Venezuela?

[Perez] I proposed in a lecture on the 500th anniversary [of the discovery of the New World] that I gave in La Rabida that the anniversary of the discovery should be used to secure a commitment by all Latin American countries to resolving our border problems, which were created in the colonial era. I also suggested that the three main actors in the process of colonizing Latin America—Spain, Portugal, and the Vatican—be asked to provide their good offices to resolve the border disputes; I suggested asking the king of Spain, the president of Portugal, and the pope that they set themselves up, not as a court or as a jurisdictional body, but as a group of friends, to help our countries seek solutions to these problems by themselves. That intervention could be very helpful.

Drug Trafficking, Crime Against Mankind

One of Carlos Andres Perez' greatest worries is the problem of drug trafficking, for which he proposes convening a world conference to lay down binding rules and to set up an international police force capable of operating in any country in order to make possible an effective struggle against this scourge.

[Ibarz] Are you afraid that Venezuela, because of its strategic position, could be "Colombianized" and become the new distribution center for cocaine?

[Perez] I would not like to use the term "Colombianization," because it is rather disparaging. The drug trafficking threat is one of my greatest worries. Drug trafficking is a very dangerous threat because, although it is invisible, its effect is extremely virulent and powerful; drug trafficking involves more money than the world oil market. We have not adopted policies at the level of this hemisphere which would really enable us to wage a thoroughgoing struggle against drugs. I have not the slightest doubt that this problem is more deeply rooted in Venezuela than we are now able to see. That is the danger, because that is what happened in Colombia. Drug trafficking grew in Colombia until the whole fabric of society found itself involved in the drug problem. This is clear.

[Ibarz] How is this danger to be tackled?

[Perez] I believe that unless we act very quickly and with the political will to do everything that must be done, we could incur a danger similar to that in Colombia. It is not just a Venezuelan problem. We must struggle, as President Lusinchi has done, for the introduction of international legislation. Drug trafficking must be regarded as an international crime; I would say, as a crime against mankind. That legislation should be laid down by a world conference, like that which was convened to lay down the law of the sea. Binding rules would be laid down and an international police force should be set up, because it is a fact that sovereignties and borders are drug trafficking's major refuge, its major bulwark.

[Ibarz] Could that international police force operate in any country in the world?

[Perez] That is what I believe. It must be so. And a constant and permanent exchange of information and records must be achieved. I can see no other effective way to tackle drugs. It is necessary to reach the bottom of the problem—the financing and the reasons why so much coca is planted, as in Bolivia.

[Ibarz] The United States confines itself to blaming the producer countries, when consumption is increasingly growing. What responsibility do the Americans and Europeans have in the drug problem?

[Perez] The United States and West Europe must accept the obligations incumbent on them: to halt drug trafficking and the financing of it from their respective countries and to cooperate with the Latin American nations. The United States must contribute financially in order to eradicate crops and develop methods to prevent trafficking in its domestic market.

Investigation Launched Into Disturbances at UCV

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[Editorial Report] Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish at 0000 GMT on 24 February carries a 5-minute report on disturbances at the Central University of Venezuela, UCV, "on Monday." According to reporter Diana Iturriza, President Carlos Andres Perez has announced that an investigation will be launched into the incidents. Iturriza adds that members of the board of directors of UCV's professors association showed the president six photographs of men in civilian clothes, reportedly armed policemen who disguised themselves to infiltrate the campus during the disturbances.

Professor Carmen Elena Sanchez is quoted as saying that she thought that the meeting with the president had been useful. According to Iturriza, Sanchez said: "We asked state security forces to explain what was going on, but we do not want them to say things to try to justify a series of illegal actions. President Perez is aware of this and so were the cabinet ministers who also attended the meeting." She added: "They have agreed to conduct an extensive investigation into the disturbances and have promised that those responsible for any crimes will be punished."

Caracas Governor Virgilio Avila Rivas is also cited in the report as noting that the investigations are being handled by the judicial courts. Avila Rivas is further quoted as saying: "These types of actions should not take place. The Venezuelan community demands that the government restore order."

The report goes on to say that UCV Rector (Luis Fuenmayor) had stated that hooded men had appeared on campus and acted like terrorists, and that he complained that this hurt the university's reputation. (Fuenmayor) adds that police authorities had arrested some people for questioning in relation to last Monday's disturbances. He also says: "We can try to isolate these groups politically by getting the community to reject them."

Meanwhile, it is said, members of the Judicial Technical Police have continued the investigations to try to locate the person who shot and killed School of Medicine worker (Carlos Yepes).

The report adds that Interior Minister Alejandro Izaguirre has ordered Luis Rivas Vasquez, head of the Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services, to release all those who were arrested during the disturbances last Monday.